

**For Immediate Release**

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# Tennessee State Penitentiary History Captured

Local authors tell the story of the Tennessee State Penitentiary through vintage images

Known in Hollywood and pop culture as one of the most famous prisons in history, Tennessee State Penitentiary is revealed in the newest addition to Arcadia Publishing's popular *Images of America* series. Boasting more than 200 arresting vintage images, *Tennessee State Penitentiary* is the collaborative work of previous Arcadia author Yoshie Lewis and historian Brian Allison.

When Tennessee became a state in 1796, there was no state run penitentiary. City and county officials often handed out inhumane punishments, including whipping and branding. After several false starts, the Tennessee State Penitentiary was built in 1831. It came to house many thieves, robbers, Confederate prisoners and even legendary criminals such as James Earl Ray. "*Tennessee State Penitentiary* creates a multi-faceted view of iconic buildings and the lives affected within those walls," Lewis said, "The book puts a human face on an institution."

In 1898, Tennessee saw the construction of the new facility, which would become known as "The Castle" and additional institutions were established. Since its closing in 1992, the penitentiary has been used for various movie shoots and ghost hunting. "It's strangely beautiful Victorian architecture has inspired many discussions about breathing new life into the dead zone, resurrecting it from its grim and violent past," Lewis said.

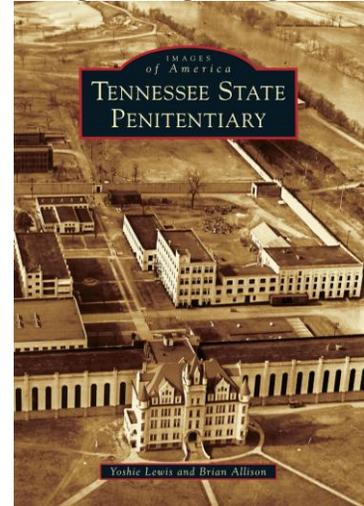
Highlights of *Tennessee State Penitentiary* include:

- Images from collections that are not readily accessible for public viewing
- Photographic documentary of riots and escapes
- Events and escapes at the pen parallel modern cinema, such as *The Shawshank Redemption* and *The Green Mile*

Available at area bookstores, independent retailers, and online retailers, or through Arcadia Publishing at (888)-313-2665 or [online](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com).

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**Yoshie Lewis** has authored two previous publications with Arcadia, *Then and Now: Lorton* and *Images of America: Muscle Shoals*. She has a BA in art history from the University of California and a MA in producing film and video from the American University. She enjoys using these in her career as a producer and writer. **Brian Allison** is Nashville born and raised and has worked in the public history field for many years, most recently as the curator of Travellers Rest Plantation. He is a museum design consultant, a graphic artist, and a writer. Both authors are Telly Award Recipients.

## ***Tennessee State Penitentiary***

by Yoshie Lewis and Brian Allison

*Images of America* Series

Price: \$21.99

128 pages/ softcover

Available: **September 23, 2013**

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## Meet **Yoshie Lewis and Brian Allison** Author of *Tennessee State Penitentiary*

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Yoshie Lewis has been working in various arenas of the entertainment business since 1983. She received her BA in Art History from the University of California, Riverside in 1990, with an emphasis in Italian Renaissance art and studies in the Italian language. In 2004, she completed a MA in Producing Film and Video at the American University in Washington, DC, with a heavy emphasis on documentary production. Since 2004, Ms. Lewis has worked as a camera operator, coordinator, and UPM on various indie films and on TV shows for FUSE, CMT, and ESPN2. In addition, she has produced a variety of music videos and documentaries, under the auspices of her own company and is a Telly Award recipient. One of these films, *Let Me Walk This Path*, was a 4- hour historical miniseries on Japan, which produced, wrote, and directed for EWTN TV. It premiered internationally in July 2010 and aired again in March 2011. She is a master with micro-budgets and loves to tell a good story.

**Yoshie Lewis**

Brian Allison is a native of Nashville, Tennessee with a deep interest in the area's rich cultural past. He graduated from Austin Peay State University with a degree in history and fine arts minor, and has enjoyed combining his two areas of concentration in his work. He has worked in the history field for the greater part of two decades, most recently as curator of Travellers Rest Plantation and Museum in Nashville. Currently he is working as a consultant associated with Transcribe group, planning and designing museum exhibits. He was the head writer on Wide Awake Films' documentary, *Franklin: Five Hours in the Valley of Death*, which was recognized with two Telly Awards and a Mid-South Regional Emmy in 2006.



**Brian Allison**

### **What lasting impact do you hope your book will leave?**

“We hope that we have provoked some thought about both history and the future, not just of this institution as represented by these buildings, but of the humanity within the walls. Some things need never be repeated – by the criminals or by those given to the overseeing of these individuals.”