



Transcript for Penn Center:

Narrator: The forties was to be the last decade for the Penn school as far as its original functions were concerned. On May 6, 1948 Penn Normal, Industrial, and Agricultural school. Became Penn Community Services the school stopped accepting new students as the task of education was taken by the state and county boards of education. So with the graduating class of 1953 the Port Royal Experiment came to an end. Through the years the Penn Community Services has been concerned with community planning and development. This location received national notice in the sixties when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. held his Southern Christian Leadership Conferences here. This was one of the few facilities available in the south at that time for such a biracial meeting. The historic March on Washington of 1963 was partly planned here at the Gant building on the Penn Center campus. In 1974 The Penn Center Campus was designated a national historic landmark. Now although the school the first in the south establish for freed slaves. No longer exist the ideals of freedom which first came alive here still exist because Penn center is now a training center for the Peace Core. It is very fitting that here in the area where school began for freed slaves of African decent young americans now prepare to go to Africa to help the under privileged. Experts in the social sciences disagree as to whether or not the Penn School accomplished its initial goals. Be that as it may as we visit the campus today and walk among stately live oaks and palmettos where Laura Towne and Ellen Murray once passed. We are aware of the enduring spirit at Penn Center. Its a sense of caring of concern of the human will which in the face of impossible odds created an institution. The first of its kind in the south to help blacks understand their own social and intellectual potential. Its here the spirit of those who have gone before and in the presence of this generation that dreams become reality. Its here that the Sea Island Blacks had been able to realize their own strength, their own identity and most importantly their own voice.

End of Video