

PHILADELPHIA CITY HALL

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

They call it the biggest show in the city of Philadelphia--and on a clear day you can almost see forever. That's the panoramic scene of Philadelphia, with miles and miles of surrounding territory stretching before your eyes from the famous City Hall tower. The altitude is rather high--548 feet above street level--yet the price of the show is very low. Matter of fact, it's free! More than 400,000 persons view the Philadelphia area from the top of City Hall every year and as Bi-Centennial approaches the numbers will increase. The view is not the only thrill of that imposing building--one of the richest sculpturally-decorated on the American continent, and it has few rivals in Europe. And what is remarkable is that all of the sculptured works of the building--statues, groups, reliefs, panels, capitals, medallions and key-stones were designed by one man, Alexander Milne Calder, a born Scotsman who emigrated to Philadelphia when he was 22. Calder devoted twenty-five years to the stupendous task of adorning the largest building in America of its time. At the top of the tower stands the famous figure of William Penn, 37 feet tall...It is still the grandest city hall in America, and it is the tallest landmark on the Philadelphia sky-line, floodlit at night to produce a superlative effect. Once the biggest building in America it is larger than the U. S. Capitol. It remains the tallest building in the world without a steel

skeleton. Walls are twenty-two feet thick. Its design was influenced by the Louvre in Paris and is known as "Second Empire". Its interior displays lavish materials and superior craftsmanship--polished marbles, handcarved woodworks, brass hardware, ornamental ceilings, mosaic floors. The Mayor's Reception Room is an ornate gem. The City Council chamber has alabaster walls. When you visit, walk one of the octagonal staircases; these stairs must be experienced, the effect cannot be conveyed by either speech or photograph. I hope that you will be able to visit Philadelphia's City Hall in the coming year. Meanwhile, we will take care of one legend as the topper of this program. That legend is that there is a law which forbids any Philadelphia building to rise higher than William Penn's hat. False! There is no such law, but legend seems to have kept anyone from proposing such a building. The City receives many letters asking that question and foreign visitors often quote this non-law when they look at William Penn's statue. But who would dare? The building itself is now legend.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.