



# The Gazette



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Sponsoring Historic Bristol Day - Third Saturday of Each October  
BCHF is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, all volunteer organization.

MAY 2021

## President's Corner

What a well-deserved tribute to Mary! On Friday, April 9th, it seemed that half the population in Bristol came out to honor Mary Gesualdi's 50 years of education in Bristol Borough. The Drive-By began at the Lenox parking lot and wound its way to Wilson

Avenue, led by Borough police. Mary had no idea what was happening until the last minute when she was crowned with a tiara and handed a huge bouquet of flowers. Car after car rolled by holding former faculty members, students, parents, and many others who have known and worked with Mary over the years. The well-planned event included coverage by the news media. That Channel 6 Van parked across the street, and the story with film appeared on the six o'clock news that night. The print media was also there, as evidenced by the articles in the Courier and The Advance. Mary has not only been a cherished educator in Bristol but has also served many volunteer roles in the community. She chaired Historic Bristol Day in the past and has agreed, along with Dawn DeLuca, to do so this year.

Yes, folks, we are planning to have Bristol Day in October. That is good news. After the cancelation of many events the past year, we know people are anxious to get out and join others at community events. Bristol Day is, for the most part, an outdoor event, so even with a few modest adjustments, we should all be safe. We cannot thank Mary, Dawn, and their committee for volunteering their time and talent to make this happen.

Also, the Ways and Means Committee met on April 19th. The committee is planning the Peach Social, a trip in late October for lunch at Chadd's Ford Inn followed by a 3-hour train ride on the Wilmington & Western Railroad. Helen Younglove is also checking on the possibility of a Christmas trip. Yes, we are getting back into the swing of things. BCHF is much more optimistic about the return to normal. In the meantime, stay safe. Keep wearing your masks, washing your hands, and enjoy every beautiful Spring day.

*Jan Ruano President*

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

BCHF is happy to announce that plans have been made to sponsor a bus trip on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. This trip will replace the one that was scheduled for last October to Boyertown. A substantial price hike in that trip resulted in the Ways & Means Committee opting for an excursion to Delaware, which will feature a 90-minute "Autumn Leaf" ride aboard the Wilmington & Western Railroad, preceded by a 3-course luncheon at the Chadds Ford Inn, established in 1736. The bus will depart from the Grundy Arena at 475 Beaver St., Bristol Borough, at 10 a.m. and return at approx. 6 p.m. Cost is \$115 for BCHF members and \$118 for non-members.

Reservations are being taken by Sue Watkins, For a detailed flier, call 215-781-8591. Reservations close on September 15, based on space availability at that time. Should the Government shut down these attractions due to COVID, the trip will be cancelled and a full refund made.



*Historic Chadds Ford Inn*

At the time of this writing, the committee was awaiting word from Lyndhurst Mansion in, Tarrytown, NY, about whether they will reopen for their holiday tour this December, in which case consideration will be given to running a trip there on December 7 or 9. Also, we're still pursuing the idea of a trip to New York City next May for a Brunch Cruise around Lower Manhattan.

Stay tuned!!

*Helen Younglove, Trips & Programs*

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## Great News! SAVE THE DATE Saturday, October 16, 2021, Historic Bristol Day and Car Show.

Council President, Ralph DiGuseppe has encouraged us to get the planning for HBD started. The council will re-evaluate the status of the pandemic at the end of August to determine whether we can proceed as normal or pivot to a virtual event. Dawn DeLuca, a lifelong borough resident, and Snyder-Girotti School math teacher, has graciously agreed to co-chair the event with me. Special thanks to Nick Rizzo for doing yeoman's work in chairing this event for the last several years. Our next HBD planning meeting will be held on Wednesday evening, May 19, at 7:00 PM. (TBD - in person or Zoom). Please consider sharing your talents with the town by helping with this year's Historic Bristol Day. Contact Mary Gesualdi at AlwaysL811@aol.com if you are interested. *Thank you, Mary Gesualdi*



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## Peach Social Will Return

*by Debbie Pinney, Peach Social Chairperson*

We have good news! After a year off due to the pandemic, the BCHF's annual Peach Social will be held on August 8 from 2 to 4 at our headquarters at 312 Cedar Street, Bristol. The Peach Social was started over 30 years ago by Sarah Carter to raise money for academic awards given to Bristol High School graduates.

We want to continue this tradition but in order to ensure the



safety of our volunteers and all the participants, we will be making this a take-out event. We'll be serving the same delicious NJ peaches, ice cream, and angel food cake but in a take-out form that can travel well to your home or a picnic site. If the weather permits, we will have some tables set up in the BCHF's headquarters shady backyard. The price will remain \$5, a great value for this delicious treat and a great cause.



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## Memories Of Bristol

One of my earliest recollections of growing up in Bristol Borough was enjoying the Rohm and Haas Company's Maple Beach property. On the banks of the Delaware River, the company had a sandy beach with a lifeguard and a two-story clubhouse. Back in the late 30s/early 40s, Rohm and Haas sponsored a half-day kindergarten on the second floor of the clubhouse. Since my father was a company employee, I had the privilege of attending that kindergarten and also spending many a delightful afternoon swimming at that site. Additionally, the company hosted an annual July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic for several years. Its Social Club held an annual Clambake on the property.

Those were the days!!

*Collected by Native Bristolian Helen Younglove*

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## Memories Of Bristol

Dear Readers:

We want to hear from you about your remembrances of Bristol. A few lines sharing a bit of your life in Bristol. Maybe a special occasion, an adventure along the river or the canal, high school sports, or even ghosts in the cemeteries. Make us look back ten, twenty, even 50, or 60 years ago. The article

could be the length of "Letters to the Editor". In fact, the headline would be "Memories to the Editor". Thanks for being a constant reader, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Send to Sue Watkins, Editor

c/o BCHF, P.O. Box 215, Bristol, PA 19007

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## *Historic Homes in Bristol*

*by Harold Mitchener*

How often do you drive along the streets of Bristol wondering about the history of some of the homes? We'll be looking, in the future, at some of these homes and giving you a peek at their history.

One such house is at 316 Radcliffe Street. The deed to this property bears the names of many founding fathers: Samuel Clift, Anthony Burton, Thomas Brock, Peter White, John Penn, and William Penn.



This colonial style clapboard house was built in 1847 by John Magoffin. Mr. Magoffin was a very dedicated Christian.

On Sundays he would go to the canal basin behind Mill Street and talk to the boatmen about the bible.

The first physician to establish his residence there in 1875 was George J. W. Kirk, M. D.. Dr. Kirk graduated from Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia. He was known for his successful treatment of typhoid fever. During the Spanish American War, Dr. Kirk was assigned to the Women's Homeopathic Hospital in Philadelphia where he treated all typhoid cases sent to that hospital. His reputation was that all the patients that he treated recovered. After the Civil War, Dr. Kirk remained in Philadelphia where he specialized in chronic diseases.

In 1892, Dr. Kirk sold his practice in Bristol to another physician, Willis P. Weaver, M.D. and moved to Girard Ave. in Philadelphia. Dr. Weaver was also a Hahnemann Medical College graduate.

In 1903, the house was sold again to a third physician and graduate of Hahnemann. When he gave up his practice the house was sold to the well-known Perotti's, business leaders in Bristol.

*From the Grundy Collection*

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## *Is It Forge Or For-Gee*

*by Harold Mitchener*

From 1827 to 1960, there was a bridge over the Delaware Canal at Beaver Street. At first, it was a wooden bridge, similar in design to the type used throughout the county for canal bridges. Around 1929, the Bristol bridge was replaced by a concrete bridge. One reason for the improved bridge was the Bristol Post Office relocating from Radcliffe and Market Sts. to Beaver and Prospect Sts. This 1914 move brought the Post Office closer to the newly-elevated (1911) railroad tracks.

At first, businessmen and residents complained the Post Office was too far "out of town." But, with the increased traffic on Beaver St., a new bridge was essential.

The unofficial name for the Beaver St. Bridge was the Forge Bridge. The pronunciation for the unofficial name for this structure was either "Forge Bridge" or For-gee" Bridge. The different pronunciations depended on where in town you might live. For the kids, names didn't matter, but what did matter was it provided an excellent hill for sledding in the winter.

The name of the bridge was influenced by the

Bristol Forge. The purpose of this business was the manufacture of wrought iron. The industry had been started by a group of capitalists who provided the sum of \$12,000 to begin the business. The location of the forge was the northwest side of the canal at Buckley and Beaver Sts (then called Beaver Dam Rd.).

Following 1860, Bristol shared in the great industrial activity of the nation. The original \$12,000 increased to \$125,000 as the products found ready markets.

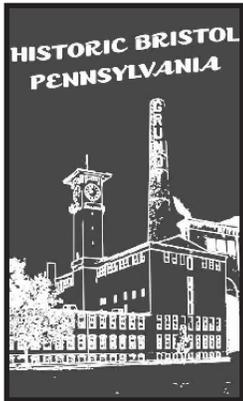
The prosperity of the Bristol Forge led to a similar industry called Keystone Forge Co. This business started with a capital investment of \$87,000. The Keystone Forge was located on the eastern side of the old railroad south of Mill St. This building was removed in 1882 when the railroad changed its course slightly south of Mill St.

The canal is no longer exposed at Beaver St. It was filled in, and the road now has a slight rise where the bridge once stood. With the canal filled and the bridge gone, Forge and For-gee have only become a historical reference.



## A Note From Ways & Means

The Ways and Means Committee is pleased to announce the first ever **Spring Sale**. We've reduced the prices of most of our sale items. Think of the events coming this spring that might require a gift and choose one of our items! To view the items, please log onto our website at: [www.bristolhistory.org](http://www.bristolhistory.org). The sale prices are for the following:



Bristol Garden Flag

Wooden hometown pieces - \$20.00 pieces will be \$15.00 and \$5.00 pieces to \$3.00

Joseph Sagolla Book (a portfolio of paintings) - \$10.00

Garden Flags – now \$10.00

Lapel pins (suitable for caps, too) \$3.00

Brass ornament (great for a holiday tree) \$6.00

Small magnets & Key fobs - \$1.00

Bristol oval magnet - \$4.00

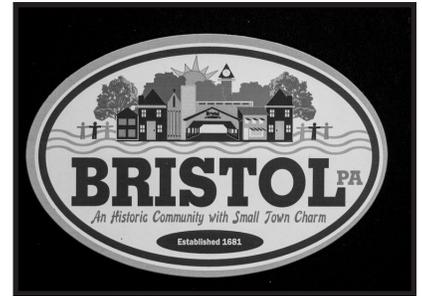
A limited edition print of the wharf commemorating the borough's 285<sup>th</sup> anniversary by Bea Berlin - \$20.00

A print of the Bristol wharf by Joseph Pavone, printed to commemorate the 1<sup>st</sup> Historic Bristol Day in 1986 - \$15.00

Bristol T-shirts (some Med., L, XL, & 2XL) - \$12.00

We hope you take advantage of these prices that will last until the end of May.

Please call me, Kathy Barniskis at 215-943-0258 or Helen Younglove at 215-788-9408 and



Photos:

Top right - - Bristol Magnet. Bottom left - - Bristol Ornament

leave your name and number. We will be glad to make arrangements for you to purchase the items at the BCHF Headquarters on Cedar St.

## The Bristol Marsh

The Bristol Marsh is one of the last remaining freshwater tidal marshes along the Delaware River. It contains rare and endangered species. There are six rare plants which depend on the combination of fresh water and the daily tidal flushing. The marsh also serves as a haven and food source for wildlife including migratory waterfowl and spawning fish. At low tide the 11 acre lagoon is a dense mat of vegetation during the growing season; it is a mud flat in winter. The marsh was once part of a larger marsh system which extended one-half mile up Otter Creek.

In 1985 the Bristol Borough Nature Conservancy and two private corporations made a commitment to preserve the Bristol Marsh as a rare example of a fresh water tidal marsh. The six intertidal plant species classified as "rare or endangered" are found at the Bristol Marsh (the only place in PA where all six rare plants can be found growing together). There is a boardwalk with interpretative signs. In the past, the inlet (now a part of the Bristol parking lot) had been used as a boat basin, canal outlet and wharf.

**Reminder:** As in past years, the names of those who are members and have paid their dues for the year will be listed in the JUNE issue of THE GAZETTE. Be sure that you have paid your dues for the year 2021 Dues: Individual, \$15.00; Family, \$25.00; Business, \$60.00. A convenient return envelope was sent to all previous members in January. You can also mail with your name and address to PO Box 215, Bristol, PA 19007.

## The Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation

urges everyone to stay safe . . . wear a mask, wash your hands and practice social distancing.

Let's make 2021 the year when we can all get back to normal.

We look forward to trips and activities and seeing everyone in person once again.

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## Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **May 1921** issues of THE BRISTOL COURIER.

5/2 — "THE STROLLER — Human Interest Items Gathered about the Town and Its People:

This column was informed today that Horace Booz, son of Mr. & Mrs. William H. Booz of Cedar Street, was among the engineers who estimated the cost of constructing the Pennsylvania Railroad tunnel under the Hudson River. The former Bristol boy not only was among those who estimated the cost of that gigantic project and engineering feat, but he came the nearest to the actual figure of \$110,000,000, it is said.

RUSSO'S DETECTIVE AGENCY, 403 Washington Street. . "Civil and Criminal Cases Carefully Investigated."

5/3 — PAY-ROLL DROP LEADS TO MARRIAGE LICENSE SLUMP. With wages dropping anywhere from ten to fifty percent, Bucks County romances are "on the fritz." The prospective grooms are taking no chances on the "poorhouse" and seem to be perfectly contented at remaining single with their pay-roll going back to normal times when \$25 a week would keep a happy half-dozen. This must be the actual truth for, during the month of April, only thirty marriage licenses were issued in the county, which is the lowest number issued since January 1917, when twenty-eight was the low mark. Bristol was nearly out-classed in the number of applicants. The Lower Bucks County borough furnished seven applicants — three grooms and four brides.

"FOR RENT — Apartment at the corner of Beaver & Garden Sts. Contains 4 rooms and bath, electric light and gas. Rent \$20."

NEW COLONIAL THEATRE, Wood Street. . "Love, Romance, Happiness in "You Find It Everywhere," from the Saturday Evening

Post Story, "The Gibson Upright" by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson. Added Attraction: Charlie Chaplin in "A Night in the Snow," and Selznick News."

5/4 — FIX SCHOOL TAX RATE AT \$1.50 PER \$100. New Curriculum for High School for Next Year. It Will Rank as an A-1 High School.

5/5 — 238 OPERATIONS AT DENTAL CLINIC. At the Bristol Dental Clinic during the month of April, 238 dental operations were performed for school children. Each of the following dentists served one-half day each week during the month: Drs. Hussey, Frey and Hargrave.

5/6 — WAWA MARKET HOUSE, 420 Mill Street. . "Good Table Butter - 39c lb., Limburger Cheese - 43c lb., Large & Juicy Grapefruit - 6 for 25c, Lettuce - 5c head & up, Tomatoes - 2 lbs. for 35c, Fancy Strawberries - 35c qt. We have the agency for GELFAND'S Mayonnaise Dressing and GELFAND'S Combination Relish."

LOUIS LITTO, the Bargain Store, 121 Otter Street. . "Large Size Sheets - 75c (\$1.50 Quality). Pillow Cases - 39c (Worth 75c). Ladies Night Gowns - 75c (Worth more than Double)."

5/8 — "HOMES FOR RENT AT HARRIMAN TOWN SITE NEAR BRISTOL, PA. 4, 5 & 6 Room Houses - \$22 to \$38 per month, incl. water. 6 Room Bungalow Apartments - \$30 per month, incl. steam heat from central plant, hot and cold water, and electric light. 3 & 4 Room Apartments - \$18 to \$26 per month, incl. steam heat from central plant, water and electric light."

STRAND THEATRE, Harriman, Pa. . "Sunday, 3, 7 and 9 o'clock. Only Showing in Bristol Area. Hobart Bosworth in "His Own Law."

5/9 — FEW STRAW HATS HERE ON FIRST DAY OF SEASON. Saturday was the opening of the straw hat season and the day was decidedly favorable to the occasion. A few of the venturesome ones appeared on the streets here garbed in summer headgear, but it could not be termed a day which was generally observed. Styles of straw hats this year run about the same as in other years, except that the height of the crown is higher.

### LOCAL PERSONALS:

Cordial invitations were extended from the pulpits of the various churches yesterday, urging that members of the respective congregations visit the Harriman Hospital next Thursday, which is to be "Visitors Day." Tea will be served from 2 to 4 p.m.

The first boys to pitch their tents on Burlington Island this season were Howard Lovett, Chauncey Stoneback, Jr., and Fred and Harold Kring.

5/11 — "HELP WANTED. Girls for spooling. \$12 per week. Steady work all year round. Apply J. E. Fricke Co., Hulmeville."

5/12 — TO ENLARGE BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH BLD'G. Extensive alterations are to be made to the Bethel A.M.E. Church building on Wood Street. There is to be an addition erected which will extend the floor space back a distance of 14 feet. New pews are to be installed and new carpet, and the interior of the church is to be renovated. Stained glass windows will replace the present ones.

5/13 — "3RD ANNIVERSARY SALE! 35 Silk Dresses - \$9.50 and \$13.90, Sizes 16 to 40. Organdie & Voile Dresses - \$3.90 and \$10.90. Gingham Street Dresses - \$2.95. Suits - \$8.50 and \$9.90. Coats - \$6.90 and \$10.90." SMITH'S MODEL STORE, 412 Mill Street.

5/17 — MANY ITALIANS TO BECOME CITIZENS. Republican Club Is Educating Foreigners for that Purpose. The Italian American Citizen Republican Club has moved its headquarters from 351 Lafayette Street to the Bristol Theatre building. Membership now totals 300. Since September 6 when the club was organized, 89 alien Italians have received their first naturalization papers. Fourteen will go to Doylestown and appear before Judge Ryan within the next four or five months and receive their second or final papers.

5/18 — LEGION PLANS TO PAY HONOR TO BRISTOL BOY. Plans for a military funeral to be held on Memorial Day for the first body of a Bristol boy to be brought back from France were made at a meeting of the Robert W. Bracken Post, No. 382, American Legion, last night. James Bolton, the son of Harry and Orpha Bolton, 248 Cedar Street, left Bristol on May 7, 1917 and was among the Bristol boys who enlisted, volunteering their services to Uncle Sam. While in the service, he contracted pneumonia and died at Valdahon Doubs, France, aged 21 years. He was a member of Head-quarters 3rd Field Artillery, Sixth Division.

5/19 — FISHERMEN TO PAY \$1 FOR LICENSE. Bristol fishermen will have to pay a license fee of \$1 under the terms of the Fishermen's License Bill designed to raise funds for the operation of the State Department of Fisheries and for general State purposes when the revenue is above \$400,000. It will

*Continued on last page*



**Bristol Cultural &  
Historical Foundation, Inc.**  
Post Office Box 215  
Bristol, PA 19007



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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## OUT OF THE PAST . . . CONTINUED

take effect on January 1.

5/20 — EIGHT TO GRADUATE IN JUNE FROM BRISTOL SCHOOL. Five Girls & Three Boys to Receive Diplomas Here. The graduating class this year is composed of Miss Doris Henderson, Miss Leona Beck, Miss Dorothy Moss, Miss Elizabeth Johnson, Miss Margaret Smoyer, Fred Kring, Fletcher Holland and George Munce.

“Best Bargains at BELSON’S, 802 Beaver Street, Cor. Garden Street. Men’s Fine Dress Shirts - 98c. Ladies’ Good Voile Waists - 98c. Children’s “Slip-ova” Romper Suits - 98c. Men’s Good Socks - 2 pr., 25c. Boys’ Heavy Blue Overalls - 49c.”

5/21 — SCENIC RAILWAY TO BE BUILT AT BURLINGTON ISLAND PARK. Amusement Device to Be Erected at Cost of \$40,000. Pavillion Enlarged and Enclosed and Interior Decorated.

5/23 — TRAFFIC PEAK REACHED HERE ON SUNDAY. Largest Number of Autos Pass through Bristol Borough. The biggest weekend is anticipated next Saturday, Sunday and Monday when those traveling over the 3-day holiday season will

pass through Bristol enroute to various destinations. A “Silent Policeman” is to be erected at the busy corner of Bath and Otter Streets.

5/26 — 200 ELKS ATTEND 16TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION. Festivities of Bristol Lodge, B.P.O.E., Elaborate Affair and Successful Event. Many Distinguished Visitors Attend.

5/28 — PER CAPITA TAX OF \$3 LEVIED ON WOMEN HERE FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES; ACTION FORCED. State Tells County Directors that New Tax Must Be Levied. Every woman in Bristol of voting age will be taxed \$3 for school purposes instead of \$1.50, according to the action taken at a special meeting of the Bristol School Board last night.

OVER 1200 SEE H.S. ATHLETES IN BIG MEET. More than 1200 persons witnessed the Bucks County Interscholastic Track and Field Meet at the George School in Newtown, yesterday. G. Hibbs won first place for the borough in the shot put. M. DeLong made first place in the girls standing broad jump for the township.

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- BCHF Headquarters are at 321 Cedar Street, Bristol.
  - For current information about activities and events, check out our web site at [www.bristolhistory.org](http://www.bristolhistory.org).  
Follow us on Instagram - - [IG@bristol\\_historic\\_foundation](https://www.instagram.com/IG@bristol_historic_foundation)

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Debbie Pinney, Mary Gesualdi, Harold Mitchener, and Sue Watkins