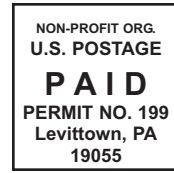




Bristol Cultural &  
Historical Foundation, Inc.  
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# The Gazette



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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 2013

## WORK CONTINUES WITHIN OUR ORGANIZATION

As our readers know, there are many tasks to be carried out to have our organization continue with its mission. We not only focus on history, but also on literature, art and music. These four are reflected in the award money we provide for graduates of Bristol High School each June. Fund Raising is constantly needed and this is one of the tasks admirably performed by the Ways and Means Committee. We must not only pay our bills to operate and preserve our historic headquarters, but also so we can provide Historic Bristol Day for the community, provide high quality programs, present bus tours available during the year and mail THE GAZETTE. This publication is not only a listing of our activities but also provides articles that have been researched by various members of our organization. We receive quite a few requests for historical research. We are fortunate to link with the history collection of the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library. Hopefully we have been able to help answer many questions.

Recently we had a request about George Washington and Bristol. This set in motion many e-mails and much research on the subject. We have also received a generous donation of historic photographs some of which will be included in next month's publication. Our Board of Directors has agreed that keeping such photographs and documents in our files at our headquarters is unfair to the community which may want to use these for continued study; therefore, the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library has agreed to preserve these within the history collection at the library and make them available for the public. Did you know that Helen Hayes, considered a "First Lady" of the American theater in the latter portion of the 20th century, was in Bristol to act in a play in 1959 at the Playhouse that was part of the former Grand Theater on Mill St.? One of the donated photographs showed Helen Hayes inspecting the plans for an addition to the former hospital that operated at Wilson Ave. and Pond St. Please examine the information we have learned about President Washington and Bristol.

## BCHF Calendar of Events for 2013

**JUNE** - Sunday, 6/2. Bus trip to "Steamin' Days" at Auburn Hgts., DE. Admission to mansion, steam museum, steam train & antique auto rides, demos & lunch. \$80/BCHF adult member, \$85/non-member, \$75/child. Call 215 788-9408 for flyer/reservations.

**JUNE** - Sunday, 6/30, 1 - 6 PM. BCHF sales & info table at Annual Celtic Day sponsored by Celtic Heritage Fdn., Lions Park, Bristol. 215 788-5232 for info.

**AUGUST** - Sunday, 8/4, between 2 & 5 PM at BCHF. Annual Peach Social. Angel food cake topped with NJ peaches & ice cream, plus beverage. Takeouts available; bring container. Baked goods table. \$5/adult; \$3 under age 12. **BENEFITS BCHF AWARDS TO BRISTOL HIGH GRADUATES.**

**SEPTEMBER** - Thurs., 9/12. Bus trip to NYC incl. 9/11 Memorial, free time and lunch in "Little Italy" for annual San Gennaro Festival, visit High Line Park. \$90/BCHF member; \$95/non-member. **WAITING LIST BEING TAKEN AT 215 788-4138.**

**OCTOBER** - 10/5 - 13. Avalon Waterways' "Romantic Rhine" river cruise from Basel, Switzerland to Amsterdam, Holland. Call 215 788-9408 for info.

**OCTOBER** - Saturday, 10/19, 10 AM - 4 PM. 37th Annual Historic Bristol Day, spotlighting the Delaware Canal. Details to follow. Fee for house tour and tea.

**NOVEMBER** - Wed., 11/20, 7 p.m. BCHF'S annual business meeting, incl. election of Board members, followed by program and refreshments. BCHF headquarters. Free. Call 215 781-9895 for info.

**DECEMBER** - 12/6, Bus trip to Fairmount Park Holiday Houses + Belmont Mansion and sit-down lunch. \$90/BCHF member; \$93/non-member. Call 215 788-9408 for flyer/reservations.

- 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).

## Yes, George Washington Did Stop Here

Since Bristol was on the route from Philadelphia to Trenton and New York using the King's Highway, George Washington would have traveled on the road through Bristol. Here are two examples.

In 1773, (this was prior to the Declaration of Independence). On May 8, 1773, George Washington set off for New York with his stepson, John Parke Custis (Jacky or Jack), to enroll him in King's College (now Columbia University in New York City). On the way north he stopped for several days in Philadelphia to visit wealthy friends. On May 23, George Washington and Jacky breakfasted with Governor Richard Penn before heading on toward New York. In his diary entry for that date George Washington writes that he "dined with Governor William Franklin at Burlington and lodging at Trenton". William Franklin was a son of Benjamin Franklin and when the Revolution was declared, he sided with the King and was arrested.

George Washington would have crossed the Delaware River at Bristol to Burlington. (There is no writing in his diary on that day about making a special stop in Bristol.). After several days in New York, George Washington left Jacky there and set off for home. According to his diary, he left New York on May 31, and on June 1 he

"Breakfasted at Brunswick on the banks of the Rariton, dined at Princeton and took lodging at Bristol." On June 2, he "Got to Philadelphia by Nine o'clock to my old lodging". Unfortunately, there is no record where George Washington lodged in Bristol on June 1, 1773. In his account ledger, George Washington simply entered a lump sum for his expenses on the trip. He probably kept some kind of cash book or other such record for the trip showing the detailed expenses. He did write that on his entry under June 2 when he paid his bill early that morning before heading on to Philadelphia. The bill was for 10 (shillings). This would be at Bristol.

During the Constitution Convention at Philadelphia in 1787, he records taking a long weekend break on Friday, August 3, 1787, to go "up to Trenton on a Fishing party". He returned to Philadelphia on Sunday, August 5. According to his diary entry for that date, he "dined at Colo. Samuel Ogdens (in Trenton) and about 4 o'clock set out for Philadelphia. Halted an hour at Bristol and reached the City before 9 o'clock".

In the Presidential Series of the Published Papers of George Washington, vol. 6 page 274, George Washington's secretary Tobias Lear wrote Clement Biddle from New York on August 26, 1790 giving him a

### Bristol Riverside Theater - 2013

"Inherit the Wind" - May 21 thru June 9, 2013

Phone 215 785-0100 for tickets, dates and additional information.

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Post Office Box 215 • Bristol • Pennsylvania • 19007 • 215 781-9895 • [www.bristolhistory.org](http://www.bristolhistory.org)  
Articles for this issue of THE GAZETTE were contributed by: Helen Younglove, Dr. Phil Chase and Harold Mitchener.  
Additional research by Carol Mitchener.

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## George Washington . . . *continued*

detailed advance itinerary for George Washington's forthcoming trip from New York to Mount Vernon by way of Philadelphia: "George Washington" is detained in New York to complete some business in the Treasury and War Departments which, the Heads of these departments inform him, will be finished by Saturday; in which case he will leave this place (New York) on Monday reach Elizabeth Town, NJ that night - - - Brunswick, NJ pm Tuesday night, Trenton on Wednesday night - - Breakfast at Bristol on Thursday morning and proceed from thence to Philadelphia." In an editor's note on page 392, the fol-

lowing is recorded: "After spending the nights of 30 and 31 August (1790) at Elizabethtown and New Brunswick, NJ, and that on 1 September, probably at Bristol, PA, George Washington and Martha Washington accompanied by Eleanor Parke Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, secretaries William Jackson and Thomas Nelson and ten servants, arrived at Philadelphia in the early afternoon of September 1790".

*Information provided by Dr. Phil Chase, University of Virginia.*

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## A Witness to the Assassination of President Lincoln

Charles O'Brien had no idea when he volunteered for the Civil War that he would not only be a guard at the President's House (not called the White House until the 20th Century) and a guard that witnessed the assassination of our 16th President in Ford's Theater. He also was one of the men who had as their duty in the Washington, DC area to help keep the repair of the railroads in the city when they would be destroyed by the Confederates.

He was one of 10 men stationed at Ford's Theater the night of the assassination and took part in the chase to capture John Wilkes Booth. O'Brien was 6 feet 4 inches and had an excellent physic.

His wife died about eleven years prior to his death. They lived at 809 Pine Street, Bristol. After the War he worked on boats in and around Philadelphia. His death occurred in October 1925 and a funeral was held at St. Mark Church.

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## Sincere Thanks

BCHF extends sincere thanks to Dan Simmers of Westmoreland City, PA for crafting and donating a handsome oak base on which the crystal bowl, donated by the Lenox Company for the 2012 Historic Bristol Day Regatta, now rests. The bowl and base are housed at the Anchor Yacht Club, sponsor of the regatta.

Dan is the brother of BCHF Board member Robin Simmers-Butrey, and was a craft vendor at last year's HBD.

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## 'Tis A Puzzlement!

The Ways & Means Committee is perplexed as to the reason why the proposed trip to Charleston, May 19-23, was not well received (only nine people signed up by the April 3 deadline). Was it the destination, the time of year, the cost, the itinerary, or some other reason?

The committee would greatly appreciate our readers' input on this before the planning process for any future overnight trips begins. Please direct your comments to Helen Younglove by phone at 215 788-9408 or by mail at 717 Mansion St., Bristol PA 19007.

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## On The Move

Our Ways and Means Committee is striving to offer trips that will appeal to BCHF members and friends. Next up is a bus trip to "Steamin Days" at Auburn Heights, Delaware, on Sunday, June 2. In the August 9, 2012 Magazine section of the Philadelphia Inquirer appeared an article describing Auburn Heights in great detail and spotlighting the impressive Victorian home of The Marshall Family and the extensive collection of "all things steam" housed in the T. Clarence Marshall Steam Museum. Our trip will afford participants the opportunity to ride on the Auburn Valley Railroad and in some of the museum's antique automobiles. A sit-down lunch is included in the price of \$80 per BCHF adult member, \$85 per adult non-member, and \$75 per child through age 12. For current

availability, contact Helen Younglove at 215 788-9408.

On **Friday, December 6**, we'll be heading to Philadelphia for the annual Fairmount Park Holiday House Tour. Upon arrival, there will be a guided tour of Mt. Pleasant and Strawberry Mansion - - both decked out in their holiday finery. After lunch at the Waterworks, we will tour Belmont Mansion, an underground railroad museum, and have a chance to meet "Old Cornelia" who first lived at the mansion as a washer woman and later obtained and celebrated her freedom as a successful local merchant. Cost is \$90 for BCHF members and \$93 for non-members. A flyer/reservation form is available from Helen Younglove (215 788-9408).

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## Have You Sent Your Membership?

As previously stated, the June issue of THE GAZETTE will publish the names of those people who have paid membership dues for the year 2013. We continue to welcome former and new members to our organization.

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## Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **May1893** issues of THE BUCKS COUNTY GAZETTE

5/4 - - LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

The milkmen have reduced the price of milk to 6 ¢ per quart.

The Farmers National Bank has declared its usual semi-annual dividend of 8 per cent.

33 Marriage licenses were issued in the month of April by License Clerk Willis Wall.

At the meeting of the directors of the Bristol Borough School District held on Tuesday evening, the salary of the superintendent was raised from \$600 to \$800 per annum.

Miss Annie Brodnax, a lady well known in Bristol, died of apoplexy at her residence on Wood Street on Tuesday.

"Bristol - Tuesday, May 9. Location Garden St. near baseball grounds. America's National Entertainment! PAWNEE BILL'S HISTORIC WILD WEST. Seats for everyone. Ladies and children our special care. Admission 50¢. Children under 9 years of age half price. The Grand Street Parade will start at 10 a.m., immediately after the cannon is heard to boom."

5/11 - - "Steamer Nellie Bly will make two daily trips from Bristol to Cochran's Park beginning May 6."

"Interstate Steamboat Co. Steamer Florence leaves Bristol 8:30 a.m. for Philadelphia. Returning Philadelphia Arch Street Wharf at 2:30 p.m."

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

At the Fidelity Building Association on last Tuesday evening, five loans were sold at 13 cents monthly premium.

The ferry boat made a late trip Tuesday night to accommodate the Burlington people who came to Bristol to visit the Wild West show.

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS. The committee on finance and public property reported in favor of a tax rate of 75 cents on the \$100. This rate, according to the estimate of the committee, would give the borough a revenue of \$18,250. The committee recommended that no tax be levied on dogs this year. The police committee reported 18 arrests for the month and 80 tourists accommodated with lodgings.

"SAMUEL W. BLACK, Cor. of Radcliffe and Mill Sts . . . Dealer in Fine Groceries, Fruits and Provisions. Goods delivered promptly."

"Queen's Sarsaparilla, an excellent Spring medicine and blood purifier. Efficient in its action. Large bottle. Small dose.

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## A New Restaurant Opens On Mill Street

The "Bristol Courier" in 1931 had an announcement that there was to be the opening of a new restaurant called the "Grand Restaurant" on Friday, April 24, 1931 at 417 Mill Street. This would have been across the street from the Grand Theater which stood on the corner of Mill and Old Route 13. They stressed "Good Home Cooking, Prices Reasonable, Under Sanitary Conditions, Kitchen Open for Inspection and all Cooking Under My Personal Supervision" S.G. Fenton - Your Patronage Will Be Greatly Appreciated".

Over the years there have been many small restaurants opened on Mill Street, especially to accommodate the shopping public. It is interesting to note that "Under Sanitary Conditions" being stressed. Sanitation laws have greatly improved and inspections are required in present food service; hence, there being no need to highlight "sanitary conditions".

For sale at DR. PURSELL'S DRUG STORE, Mill and Cedar Sts."

"R. BUSEMAN, Bread and Fancy Cake Bakery and Ice Cream Parlor. Weddings and parties supplied at short notice. Bath and Otter Streets.

5/18 - - LOCAL INTELLIGENCE

There are three cases of diphtheria in Bristol.

William H.J. Wilson will open his dance academy in Riverview Hall on next Wednesday evening.

Last Friday morning, a woman was found dead drunk near the canal, above Grundy's mill. She was taken to the station house and released after she had sobered up.

"Go to the CARRIAGE AND WAGON REPOSITORY. From 25 to 100 constantly on hand. Lots of huckster wagons. Chas. H. Mathews, proprietor. Radcliffe and Market Sts."

"For Sale. New house. Just suit a young married couple. Price \$1550; \$750 cash, balance on time at 5 per cent per annum if desired. G.W. ADAMS, 117 Mulberry St."

"At Bristol, Thursday, May 25. The Only Living ADAM FOREPAUGH'S Brand New Show. Public Pageant Parade at 10 a.m."

5/25 - - LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

The new ferry boat, William E. Doron, is expected to arrive about the first of June.

The Mite Society of the M.E. Church will hold their annual strawberry festival in Riverview Hall, Tuesday afternoon and evening, June 7th. Admission is 10 cents.

Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin Co. will give a performance in Bristol on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 30th and 31st insts. This beautiful old play will be given in a pavilion on Corson's grounds, next to the baseball grounds.

"Decoration Day Prices. Cheapest plants in town. 7 Geraniums, 50¢; 15 Geraniums, \$1.00. 100 Bouquets ready-made by 7 a.m. Decoration Day. THOS DE WITT, Pond St. near Walnut. Also at THOMPSON'S CASH GROCERY, cor. Mill and Cedar Sts."

"FREDERICK KING, Dealer in Headlight and Other Oils. Lamps and Fixtures. Confectionery. Cor. Pond and Dorrance Sts."

"WILLIAM TERNESON, Manufacturer and Dealer in Ladies' and Gentlemen's Fine Boots, Shoes and Gaiters. A first-class calf-skin Gaiter, my own make, \$3. Cor. Mill and Pond Sts."

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## Rules Have Changed

Imagine reading this paragraph in the local newspaper from the School Directors of Bristol: "All women teachers who have been or will be married this school year shall not be re-employed. Hereafter no new teachers who are married shall be engaged as teachers in Bristol."

This resolution was unanimously adopted by the Bristol School Board in January 1926. It was due to the numerous marriages which had occurred among the women members of the teaching faculty.

Fast forward to the present and this resolution would bring lawyers "running" to help submit law suits on behalf of female faculty members.