



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.

APRIL 2023

Vice President's Corner

Shopping in Bristol, 1950s

Here in Bristol, it's Saturday morning, and breakfast is over. The kitchen is clean. Mother would send us upstairs to get dressed to go shopping. We would have washed up in the only bathroom in the house. Dad and brother slicked their hair with "A Little Dab'll Do Ya." Father wore his suit, his head topped with a fedora. Mother looked smart in the Butterick pattern dress she had made herself. Nylons were available again, and she finished her outfit with heels. My brother belted his corduroys and pulled on his sweater while I slipped into the skirt and top with pompoms that made me feel so grown-up, even though I was just eleven.

Where were we going? We went shopping on Mill Street, of course!

Like all small towns in America, the Great Depression was a memory. World War II won, ushering in an era of optimism and progress. But what impact did the prosperity of the 1950s have on our family and other families in Bristol Borough? All those paychecks from businesses and factories made the cash registers ring out as Bristol merchants welcomed Bristol families and families from the homes in the new community of Levittown. Shops were full of goods. Some of the offerings were dazzling to our eyes. Televisions and electric washing machines were dreams no more.

Shopping on Mill Street in the 1950s was a unique experience. Back then, it was a way of life for many people to shop locally and support their community. The stores were small and personal, with owners who knew their customers by name. People would walk from store to store, window shopping and chatting with friends along the way. There were no big box stores or online shopping options, so Main Street was the hub of commerce in most towns. Shopping on Main Street in 1950 was more than just buying goods; it was about building relationships and supporting local businesses vital to the community's economy.

There were many thriving shops lining both sides of Mill Street. Pond, Farragut, and many other streets

also had popular stores. Stores sold groceries, general merchandise, and hardware. There were hair saloons, barbershops, banks, and more. In no particular order, some you might remember: Kanter's Department Store, Popkin's, The French Shop, Moffo's, Nichol's, Wagman's, J. S.

Lynn, Dries Furniture, Edward's, Ballows, Premier Jewelers, Singer Bros. Norman's Stationery, Spector', Straus', McCrory's 5 & 10, W. T. Grant, Richman's, Gilardi's, Auto Boys, Profy & Sons, Brosbe's. These businesses on Mill Street provided the residents of Bristol Borough with everything they needed. The street was a bustling place in the 50s.



In the 1950s, small towns like Bristol had a different job market than today. Most people worked in agriculture or manufacturing jobs, such as farming, factories, and mills. Women typically worked in service industries like retail, clerical, or teaching positions. Small-town jobs were often labor-intensive and required specialized skills. Despite the limited job opportunities, small towns offered families a sense of community and stability. The economy exploded after World War II, and many people enjoyed steady employment with decent wages and benefits.

There was a dark side to all this prosperity. A shopping center planned by Wm. Levitt, just four minutes or so down the road with 4,000 parking spaces and a mile of retail stores, would ultimately change the shopping habits of Bristolians. Leon Plavin, a prominent Bristol businessman, wrote in the *Bristol Courier* on February 13, 1953, referring to the plans for the Levittown Shopping Center: "All we can hope to do is hold our present business volume and present value as a shopping center, and if we do not do these things, then we can look to see many empty stores on Bristol's Mill Street within five years from, today."

Sadly Mr. Plavin's comments proved accurate, and shoppers moved to the new shopping center and left Mill Street and Bristol behind.

Sue Watkins, Vice President

Sippin' Sunday

Come sip tea and savor tasty sandwiches and scones at BCHF's 26th Annual Tea on Sunday, April 30, from 2 to 4 p.m., in BCHF's headquarters. This year we've added an exhibition by the Artists of Bristol and keyboard selections by local pianist Francis X. Danis for your enjoyment. Cost is \$35 per person. A limited number of reservations are available and will be taken starting on

Monday, April 3, at 215 788-9408. Reservations close on April 19. We hope to see many BCHF members and friends at this event!



Please note: The article on Page 2 of the March Gazette mistakenly stated that payment could be made at the door and that students would be free.

Deadline Approaching

April 18 is the reservation deadline for our June 21 bus trip to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia to visit the world premium exhibition of DISNEY 100. The Walt Disney Archives has opened its vault of treasures, showcasing more than 250 of its "crown jewels," rarely seen artworks and artifacts, costumes and props and other memorabilia.

Exclusively for this exhibition Disney has curated special behind-the-scenes glimpses into the creation of the company's most popular characters, films, shows and attractions from Disneyland to Walt Disney World and beyond. Plus, ten magnificent and imaginatively themed galleries will take us on a journey through 100 years of the Walt Disney Company.

Afterward, we'll have a three-course dinner at Spasso's Italian Grill. All inclusive cost is \$145 for BCHF members and \$148 for non-members. Call Jan Ruano at 215 788-2106 before the deadline of April 18 for a flyer/reservation form.

Delightful Dining Cruise

We hope you will join us for a delightful luncheon cruise on the "River Lady" on Tuesday, August 22, as we sail down the scenic Toms River and beautiful Barnegat Bay. The "River Lady" is a 150-passenger, authentic reproduction of a paddlewheel riverboat. Our narrated cruise will pass lovely waterfront homes, magnificent properties, yacht clubs, historic areas and, if we're lucky, a sailboat race.

For lunch we'll have a choice from six entrees, accompanied by a salad, rolls, dessert and coffee and tea. Following the cruise, we'll be whisked off to Asbury Park for some free time on the boardwalk.

Cost is \$115 for BCHF members and \$118 for non-members. A detailed flyer with reservation form will be available in mid-April. Contact Helen Younglove at 215 788-9408.

See the Calendar of Events on the back page of this Gazette for information on our December 7 trip to "The Original Christmas Lights Tour" in Brooklyn, as well as other planned events.

Cars Are Cruise-In

The Bristol Day Car Show Committee, chaired by Mark Gesualdi, has something new lined up for car enthusiasts this year. He calls them "Cruise-Ins on the Delaware". A cruise-in is a car show minus judging and trophies, which concludes with a drive through town. In this case, the participating vehicles will "cruise" from Radcliffe and Mill Streets to Radcliffe and Green Lane, then disperse. Put your lawn chairs out and enjoy!

The first event is scheduled for Wednesday, June 7 from 5 to 8 p.m.; the second on Wednesday, August 16 at the same time. The rain dates are June 14 and August 23, resp. Owners of American and foreign antiques and classics, newer Corvettes, Camaros, Firebirds, Mustangs, Challengers, T-Birds, street rods, exotics and luxuries, etc., are invited to display their vehicle on the river side of the Municipal Parking Lot behind Mill Street for viewing by the general public. Registration fee of \$10 is payable at the event. This includes a chance to win a King George II Inn gift certificate. Hot dogs and sausage and pepper sandwiches, prepared by the Bristol High School Drama Club, will be available for purchase, and a list of Mill and Radcliffe Street eateries will be provided.

Lenape Native Americans

Bristol Borough is located where the Lenape Indians once lived.

The question is where did they go and why? William Penn received a charter from King Charles II to establish Pennsylvania. Penn, through a translator he employed, made a treaty with the Lenape Indians.

After Penn had returned to England, the Penn's sons, Thomas, John and Richard, established a Walking Purchase that essentially cheated the Lenape out of 1,200 square miles of land. The Lenape Nation eventual-

ly went to Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Ontario, Canada. After long negotiations with the native tribes, it was decided that land at Pennsbury Manor would be set aside to bury Lenape from the three locations mentioned above. There was a ceremony at Pennsbury Manor for the transfer of bodies to the area near Pennsbury Manor.

The Lenape native Americans are back where they once lived.

Source: "Pennsylvania Heritage" periodical.

Author Michael C. Harris: *The Philadelphia Campaign*

The Grundy Library, in collaboration with the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation (BCHF), is pleased to host author Michael C. Harris at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 as he discusses his latest nonfiction title, *The Philadelphia Campaign 1777-78*. The program will be held at the BCHF headquarters at 321 Cedar Street, Bristol, PA 19007. Seating is limited for this free community event; please register online at www.grundylibrary.org, or by calling the Grundy Library at 215 788-7891.

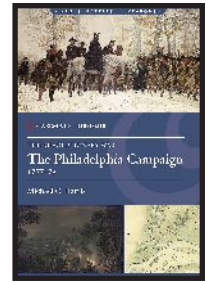


In addition to this June 2023 release, Mr. Harris is author of two other American Revolution titles, *Brandywine: A Military History of the Battle that Lost Philadelphia but Saved America, September 11, 1777*, and *Germantown: A Military History*

of the Battle for Philadelphia, October 4, 1777. Copies of his books will be available for purchase at the event.

Michael C. Harris is a graduate of the University of Mary Washington and the American Military University. He has worked for the National Park Service in Fredericksburg, VA; Fort Mott State Park, NJ; and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission at Brandywine Battlefield, Chadds Ford, PA. He has conducted tours and staff rides of many east coast battlefields. Certified in secondary education, Mr. Harris teaches in the Philadelphia region; he lives in Pennsylvania with his wife Michelle and son Nathanael.

The link to the LibCal registration form is <https://calendar.buckslib.org/event/10508062>



Artists of Bristol Art Show at BCHF

On April 21, 2023 at the BCHF headquarters from 6-8 P.M., the Artists of Bristol will host a Reception which will be open to the public free of charge with light refreshments. Each participating artist will show 2 pieces of their artwork.

In addition to the reception the building will be open for viewing of the artwork & sales on April 22 & 23 and May 6 & 7 from 1-3 P.M.

The types of art displayed will include oil painting, watercolor, acrylics, photography, mixed media, collage and digital art.

This show will remain until May 9th.

This will be the first time in many years the two organizations will join together for a public show.

BCHF Headquarters is located at 321 Cedar Street in Bristol Borough.



Bristol Courier, Printed on Beaver Street in Bristol Borough

I really enjoyed reading Sam Black's story about his mother, Edith Black, gathering the social events for the Bristol Courier. I recall a lady named Mrs. May Harvason who lived on Otter Street doing the same thing. My mother was one of the people she called.

At that time the Bristol Courier also listed families that had new children in their family. There were also weddings listed.

One of the things I enjoyed was that they also recorded sports for Bristol High School. One of the games that was fun was the "Little Brown Jug" game between Bristol and Burlington. The Thanksgiving day game between Morrisville and Bristol was the last game of the season.

There were reporters who went to churches and the synagogue to take pictures and report on social events in the congregations.

If the Elks, Lions, Masons or any other fraternity or

club had an event it would be covered.

The paper always recorded the names of students who graduated from Bristol High and where the graduation took place.

There were times that social events for the workers of Rohm and Haas were reported.

Mr. Grundy often had a picnic for workers.

Those days for the Bristol Courier are gone.

The Bucks County Courier Times now reports on events throughout Bucks County. Bristol is only one of the many towns and social events about Bristol are not mentioned.

I remember how nice it was to read about them when they were in the Bristol Courier.

Harold Mitchener

Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **April 1963** issues of the BRISTOL DAILY COURIER.

4/1 – 28 RAINBOW GIRLS HOLD LILY PARADE. Twenty-eight members of the Order of Rainbow for Girls will hold lily parades Friday and Saturday in shopping areas of Bristol for the Easter Seal campaign of the Society for Crippled Children and Adults. Mrs. Helen S. Lynn, mother advisor, of 312 Mill St., is chairman of the event.

63 COMPETE IN KART RACE. A full race program was run off yesterday at the Bristol Kartway, with a total of 63 karts competing. This was 15 more than the 48 which raced last week. Races are held at the Bristol Kartway each Sunday at 2 p.m., weather permitting.

“Prom Dresses – Sheaths & Bouffants. BRIDAL CENTER, 700 Pond St.”

4/3 – BRISTOL HIGH STUDENTS WILL PRESENT RECITAL. Bristol High School students will present a recital of classical and contemporary music in the high school auditorium on Thursday night. The students taking part are: Mary Frances Asta, James Barthold, Beverly Buck, Karen Carlson, Candy Cole, Darla Fahringer; Christine, Cynthia, Celeste and Cheron Favata, Melinda Giordano, Kathleen Nicoletti, Cheryl Ryan and Claire Schmidt.

GLAUCOMA CLINIC SLATED FOR BRISTOL. On Saturday, the Bristol Lions Club and the Bucks County Association for the Blind will sponsor a special glaucoma clinic at the Bristol workshop of the Blind Association, 635 Bath Street, from 3 to 6 p.m. Free transportation will be provided from Wood and Mill Streets during the afternoon. The tests will be carried out by Dr. Alvin Smith and Dr. Marvin Radoff.

D'ANGELO RESIGNS AS COACH. “Chic” to Stay as Athletic Director. The Courier-Times learned last night that Anthony “Chic” D’Angelo has resigned as basketball coach at Bristol High School. As of the moment, no successor has been named for the coaching job.

“LANZA’S BAKERY features Italian Easter Bread. Call ST 8-7944. Sorry, no delivery.”

4/8 – BRISTOL BOROUGH SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT. Today’s special magazine supplement in the Courier-Times is devoted to the Bristol Borough school system. The supplement is the fifth of an unusual series on Lower Bucks County educational processes. Content is prepared by school administrative and faculty people themselves.

BRISTOL GRADS IN COLLEGES. Approximately 30 per cent of the seniors at Bristol High School continue their education after graduation. 25 per cent of these students attend four-year colleges. In the 1961-62 school year, Bristol had a 100 per cent college placement of those seniors desiring to attend college and, for the present year, 98 per cent of those applying have

been accepted in the college or university of their first choice.

1725 BRISTOL STUDENTS SING, PERFORM AND LISTEN. All pupils in the Bristol Borough schools are part of the musical program through singing, performing or listening experiences.

“All Mill Street Stores Are Open Every Evening This Week! Excepting Saturday Night. Win a live pony this Saturday. Drawing at 5 p.m. in front of Premier Jewelry Store.”

4/9 – “ROBERT HALL Easter Week Specials for Boys & Girls! Girls’ New Spring Coats - \$9.89 to \$12.89. Boys’ Ivy and Continental Spring Suits - \$14.95. Free alterations in time for Easter, plus free alterations as he grows! Rt. U.S. 13, just north of Rt. 413, Bristol.”

4/10 – BRISTOL MAY JOIN BUCKS TECH SCHOOL. Students in the senior grades at Bristol High School may be able to attend Bucks County Technical School in 1965. To join, Bristol will have to pay its share of the cost of building the school. This amounts to \$22,173.58, which will be paid over three years. In addition, Bristol will pay 4.4 per cent of the annual operating costs of the school, a figure based upon the present secondary school enrollment in Bristol.

“Friedman Lingerie Easter Sale. Baby Doll P.J. – Was \$3.98, Now \$1.59. Pop Over P.J. – Was \$3.98, Now \$1.59. All perfect merchandise, no damages or irregulars. SOL FRIEDMAN & SONS, Canal & Dorrance Sts.”

“Dine Out This Easter at Picturesque Pennsbury! Full-course dinner. Baked Ham, \$3.50. Leg of Lamb, \$3.50. Roast Beef, \$3.50. PENNSBURY INN, Bordentown-Perry Rd., Morrisville. “Recommended by Duncan Hines.””

“A & P, 320 Pond St., Bristol.....Baskets of Values for Easter Feasters. Red Circle Coffee – 3 lb. bag, \$1.71. Bake & Serve Rolls – 10 in bag, 29c. Sultana Fruit Cocktail – three 30-oz. cans, \$1. Sunnybrook Fancy Creamery Butter – ¼ lb. prints, 68c. 12-14 lb. Smoked Hams – 43c lb.”

4/13 – CHURCHES SET SPECIAL RITES TOMORROW. The fifth annual community Easter sunrise service will be held tomorrow at 6 a.m. in Bristol at the foot of Market Street, along the Delaware River. The public is invited to the service sponsored by the Bristol Presbyterian Church and the Bristol Methodist Church.

4/17 – SILVER LAKE PARK OFFERS BOATING. Silver Lake Park, located on Rt. 13 at Bath Road, Lower Bucks County, is a beautiful green spot ideal for family picnics. Tables and fireplaces are available. Those who bring their own boats may enjoy boating on the lake. There is also a large Olympic-size swimming

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Out Of The Past - *continued*

pool, flanked by wading and training pools, all supervised by trained lifeguards, and a ballfield is located at the southern tip of the park.

4/18 – BRISTOL TO GET INDUSTRIAL CENTER. Hunter Plant Is Sold. The former Hunter-Wilson Co. Distillery on Green Lane has been sold to Eugene Kardon Enterprises, Inc., of Philadelphia, and will be developed as a multi-million dollar industrial center.

BRISTOL LIONS WILL DONATE BENCHES. The Bristol Lions Club will donate five park benches to the proposed Bristol waterfront park.

4/19 – OLD KEENE HOME WON'T BE TORN DOWN. Escapes Being Park Lot. The site of the present Bristol Free Library will be used for a parking lot when the Margaret R. Grundy Library is built on Radcliffe Street. As a result, the historic Keene Home will not be torn down.

BRISTOL, DELHAAS NAME GRID COACHES. Two new head football coaches will be at the helm in Lower Bucks County next season: Ted Kowal at Bristol High School and Stan Lelinski at Delhaas.

“Come to Our Grand Opening, Monday, April 22! Continuous Entertainment. Filet Mignon Dinner, \$2.50. Bossa Nova every Friday – Arthur Murray Dancers. Bucks County’s Fashionable GLEN LAKE INN on Rt. 213 at U.S. Rt. 1, Langhorne, near Roosevelt Drive-In.”

4/23 – TOM JUNO MEMORIAL FUND CAMPAIGN STARTS TOMORROW. “The Tom Juno Memorial Fund joins with the American Cancer Society Crusade in Bristol this year,” said Bristol Postmaster Lawrence Mulligan, chairman of the Bristol Crusade. “We feel that the friends of Tom Juno will want to make it a success.” Juno was assistant postmaster at Bristol and a sports writer for the Courier-Times.

CJA CHAIRMAN. Alan J. Vogenberg is chairman of the Pharmacists’ Division of the \$50,000 Combined Jewish Appeal being staged in Lower Bucks County. The CJA will hold its \$100 minimum dinner on Saturday night at the Temple Shalom, Edgely Road, Levittown.

4/25 – THEY DREAM – AND PLAN – FOR BRISTOL’S FUTURE. Three years ago, five men sat down and each wrote a list of improvements they would like to see in Bristol Borough. From these lists and the discussion and work that have followed, has come a dream that is already being turned into a reality. The five men are members of the Bristol Borough Planning Commission. Here are some of the things they would like to see happen in Bristol in the future: **a waterfront park, a small boat marina, an Early American motif for the entire borough, the development of industrial parks within the borough so that small businesses would be more concentrated, a large scale urban renewal plan over a course of years that will upgrade housing while still retaining the borough’s charm.**

4/30 – HISTORIC BRISTOL CHARTER IS SOUGHT. An application has been filed with the Bucks County Court of Common Pleas for a charter for “Historic Bristol – on – Delaware” by the group recently formed to preserve and develop interest in the history of Bristol Borough. The organization is a non-profit group presided over by Bristol attorney Paul V. Forster. Its immediate objective is to secure the historic Keene Home on Radcliffe Street, both as an historic site and as a possible headquarters for the group. The aims beyond this are to stimulate interest in Bristol through gathering and displaying documents and other objects of historic interest. The group also hopes to assist in the preservation of the historic character of the borough.

BCHF Calendar of Events For 2023

APRIL. Fri., 4/21, 6 to 8 PM. Reception and exhibition by Artists of Bristol hosted by BCHF. BCHF headquarters. Free. Light refreshment. See article in main section for more info.

APRIL Sun., 4/30, 2 to 4 PM. Annual Tea, featuring an exhibition by the Artists of Bristol and keyboard selections by Francis X. Danis. BCHF headquarters. \$35 pp. Reservations at 215-788-9408 beginning April 3 and closing on April 19.

JUNE. Sun., 6/4, 2 PM. Professional storyteller and independent historian Carol Simon Levin’s first-person portrayal of Emily Warren Roebling, entitled “Bridge Builder in Petticoats.” Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. Donation of \$5/adult requested; students free. Payable at the door.

JUNE. Wed., 6/7 (rain date 6/14), 5 to 8 PM. “Cruise-In” Car Show in Municipal Parking Lot behind Mill St., fol-

lowed by police-led cruise from Radcliffe & Mill Sts. to Green La. See bristoldaycarshow.com for details.

JUNE. Wed., 6/21. Bus trip to “Disney100: The Exhibition” at the Franklin Inst., Phila., followed by dinner at Spasso’s Italian Grill. \$145 for BCHF members; \$148 for non-members. Call 215-788-2106 for reservation flyer. Reservations close on April 18 or earlier if demand warrants it.

JULY. Sat., 7/15 (rain date 7/16), 10 AM to 4 PM. Annual “Mahogany & Steel” featuring antique & classic boats and cars on display at the wharf area and river side of municipal parking lot. See bristoldaycarshow.com.

AUGUST. Sun., 8/13, 2 to 4 PM. Annual Peach Social at BCHF headquarters. Fee. Take-outs available. Event benefits awards to Bristol High School graduates.

AUGUST. Wed., 8/16 (rain date 8/23), 5 to 8 PM. “Cruise-In” Car Show” See June 7 event above for details.

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**Bristol Cultural &
Historical Foundation, Inc.**
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BCHF Calendar of Events For 2023 - *Continued*

AUGUST. Tues., 8/22. Luncheon cruise on “River Lady” followed by free time to stroll the boardwalk in Asbury Park. \$115 for BCHF members; \$118 for non-members. See article in main section for details.

AUGUST. Tues., 8/22, 7 PM. Presentation by Author Michael C. Harris in collaboration with the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library. Mr. Harris will discuss his latest non-fiction novel, “The Philadelphia Campaign 1777-78.” Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. No fee.

OCTOBER. 10/6-17. Holy Lands & Aegean Majesty (Jerusalem to Rome) cruise on Oceania Cruises’ “Oceania Nautica.” Call 215-788-9408 for a detailed flyer.

OCTOBER. Sat., 10/21, 10 AM to 4 PM. 47th Historic Bristol Day. Consult future Gazettes for details.

OCTOBER. 10/26-11/ 4. 10-day cruise aboard Royal Caribbean Cruise Line’s “Vision of the Seas,” sailing from Baltimore to King’s Wharf, Bermuda, Nassau, and Cococay, Bahamas. Call 215-788-9408 for a detailed flyer.

NOVEMBER. Wed., 11/15, 7:30 PM. BCHF’s annual meeting at BCHF headquarters. The public is cordially invited.

DECEMBER. Thurs., 12/7. Bus trip to “The Original Christmas Lights Tour” featuring elaborately-decorated homes in the Dyker Heights, Bay Ridge and Bensonhurst sections of Brooklyn. Full-course dinner at Tommaso’s in Brooklyn. \$169 for BCHF members; \$172 for non-members. Consult future Gazettes for reservation details.

• BCHF Headquarters are at 321 Cedar Street, Bristol.

• For current information about activities and events, check out our web site at www.bristolhistory.org.

Follow us on Instagram - -

IG@bristol_historic_foundation

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THE GAZETTE is a publication of the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Inc. - Nancy Maren, Editor

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