



# 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.

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## President's Corner

### BCHF's Research Opportunity

Everyone knows that throughout its 56 years, BCHF has worked hard to enrich the community through presentations, special events like Historic Bristol Day, and support of students and other non-profit organizations. However, rarely do we have the opportunity or resources to conduct actual historical research. We were privileged to be given such an opportunity in 2010 when a grave marker, stolen by vandals, was recovered by a Middletown police officer who tracked that marker to Bristol and contacted BCHF for help. We presented the results of our research at a rededication of the grave marker at the Bristol Friends Meeting House on Bristol Day that year. The following is the written transcript of that presentation.

“Over 180,000 African Americans served in the Union army and navy during the U.S. Civil War and approximately 38,000 died. Both free African-Americans and runaway slaves joined the fight, believing that the union they defended could no longer deny them equality and freedom.

Some of these young African American men lived in Bristol and were buried in the Friends burial ground including William Washington of company G, 54<sup>th</sup> regiment, Massachusetts and William Hampton, company B of the 41<sup>st</sup> regiment.

We are here today to rededicate the grave marker of William Hampton who was born in 1844 and died in 1922. Mr. Hampton's grave marker was removed by vandals and later found by officer Joe Cullura of the Middletown police while trimming bushes. Officer Cullura contacted members of the Philadelphia GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) whose information suggested that Mr Hampton's grave was located in the Bristol Borough Friends burial ground. This information was confirmed in a catalogue of graves compiled in 1924 by Dr. F. Leedom.

Records stored in the National Archive show that William Hampton was a private in the 41<sup>st</sup> U.S. Col'd Infantry. The record indicates that William Hampton

joined the 41<sup>st</sup> regiment as a substitute in Trenton, N.J. on October 27, 1864 and was dispatched to Camp William Penn outside of Philadelphia. Mr. Hampton, who was 21 at the time of his enlistment, served a year in the 41<sup>st</sup> and was mustered out with the company on December 10, 1865.

Using available obituary databases, the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation was able to show that William Hampton was married to Rebecca (Limehouse) Hampton (1849-1936) and had a daughter Ida (1877-1968) and a son Daniel (b. 1871). Ida Hampton married Noah West (d. 1940) and together they had a daughter (Mrs. Edward Strother) and grandson. At the time of her death, Rebecca Hampton lived with her daughter and son-in-law at 536 Locust Street.

Today as we rededicate William Hampton's grave marker, let us remember the African American soldiers and sailors who fought and often died in the Civil War to achieve equality and freedom in these United States.”

Information for this research was obtained thanks to resources at the Grundy Library and the National Archive in Washington, DC.

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Rereading the results of our research reminds me that another non-profit organization actively conducts research on African American history, the African American Historical & Cultural Society of Bucks County. Like us, they need your support. Please see their website, <https://aahcsbc.wordpress.com/> and join or donate at the following address:

African American Historical & Cultural Society of Bucks County PO Box 1532 Attn: Ms. Louise Davis Bristol, PA 19007

*Debbie Pinney, President*

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## Bridge Builder in Petticoats

History will come alive on **Sunday, June 4**, when Carol Simon Levin takes the stage at BCHF to present “Bridge Builder in Petticoats: Emily Warren Roebling,” who was known for her contributions to the completion of the Brooklyn Bridge. Ms. Levin is a professional storyteller and independent historian who specializes in telling the stories of “fascinating women history forgot” through first-person portrayals.

The presentation **will begin at 2:00 p.m.** and will be followed by light refreshment. A donation of \$5 per attendee is requested, payable at the door. There is no fee for students.

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## Minus One, Plus Two

To those who signed up for the planned June 21 trip to Philadelphia for “Disney 100: The Exhibition,” we express sincere regret at having to cancel it. Unfortunately we received only 12 reservations out of the required minimum of 45. We’re very optimistic that our two remaining trips will be successful.

The flyer/reservation for our **August 22** luncheon cruise aboard the “River Lady” is now available from Helen Younglove at 215 788-9408. Our group will sail down the scenic Toms River and beautiful Barnegat Bay on this authentic reproduction of a paddlewheel riverboat, while dining on one of six entree options with all the trimmings. From Toms River, NJ our

motorcoach will whisk us away to Asbury Park, NJ, for some free time on the boardwalk. The all-inclusive cost is \$115 for BCHF members and \$118 for non-members. Reservations will close on June 15 or before if demand warrants it.

As you will see from BCHF’s CALENDAR OF EVENTS, our travel year will end on Thursday, December 7, with a bus trip to Brooklyn for the extravagant “Christmas Lights Tour,” preceded by a full-course dinner at a popular Italian restaurant. The all-inclusive cost is expected to be \$169 for BCHF members and \$172 for non-members. Complete information should be available in the June Gazette.

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## Combined Car & Boat Show Returning

The Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, along with the Mid-Atlantic Antique and Classic Boat Society of NJ, will once again present the “Mahogany and Steel Car and Boat Show on the Delaware,” **Saturday, July 15** (rain date July 16th), 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will be staged at the Bristol Wharf and docks, and in the Bristol Borough Municipal Parking Lot (behind Mill St.) from Cedar St. to Riverfront Park. Don’t miss the opportunity of seeing antique and classic boats from renowned manufactures such as Chris Craft, Hacker, Garwood and others, covering 100 years of boat building. Come see these great works of art being displayed on land and in the water!

In the parking lot, view automotive works of art! On display will be American and foreign antique and classic cars, along with newer Corvettes, Camaros, Firebirds, Mustangs, Challengers, Tbirds, street rods, exotics, luxuries and more. There is no admission fee

for attendees, and you’ll have the opportunity of voting for your favorite antique and classic car.

Make a day of it, enjoy the show, dine at any of the great restaurants in the area, or support the Bristol High Drama Club by “wrapping your chops” around one of their sausage and pepper sandwiches or a hot dog! And be sure to stay for the car cruise up Radcliffe Street from the King George II Inn to Green Lane, beginning at 3:00.

For more information on the boat show, visit [Mid-AtlanticACBS.com](http://Mid-AtlanticACBS.com). For more car show information and pre-registration, visit [bristoldaycarshow.com](http://bristoldaycarshow.com).

Be sure to check out the “Cruise-In Car Shows” on **Wednesday, June 7** (rain date June 14) and **Wednesday, August 16** (rain date Aug. 23), 5 to 8 p.m., in the Municipal Parking Lot behind Mill St., followed by a police-led “cruise” from Radcliffe & Mill Sts. to Green Lane.

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### ***DID YOU RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?***

In January of each year, the membership chair sends all previous year members a letter and remittance envelope reminding them that it is time to renew their membership. BCHF is a very active organization with programs, trips, cruises, social events and, of course, Historic Bristol Day. All of this information is in our newsletter which is mailed to all current mem-

bers. So don’t miss out on getting the latest news plus historic articles and much more.

*A list of all current members will be published in the June issue of the Gazette.*

We urge you to renew your membership, if you have not already, so that we can continue to send you these newsletters on a regular basis.

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## The Founding of the Synagogue in Bristol

In 1905 people of the Jewish faith in Bristol met in the back room of a tailor shop on Mill Street.

The Ahavath Achim Beneficial started in 1908 and in 1917 the congregation was organized as a synagogue. The group purchased a three story building at 119 Pond Street to be used as their synagogue.

In 1949 they constructed a building at 216 Pond Street for their new synagogue. In this building there was a basement floor where they could have recreation for the children.

At a certain point the group dwindled and they decided to close the building on Pond Street and join with a synagogue in Yardley. There is a Jewish school in Yardley on College Avenue where one room was made into a synagogue using chairs and other items

brought over from the Bristol building. Important papers were sent to Temple University and some papers were given to the Grundy Library Historical Collection.

The following is a list of some of the stores on Mill Street that had Jewish proprietors: Norman's Stationary, Popkin's Shoes, Ballow's Shoes, Kanter's Clothing, Richman's (curtains, towels, washers, TV and radio), Dries Furniture, Smith's Model ladies clothing, Wagman's Clothing, Shiffer's cloth and sewing goods, Spector's Men's clothing, Marty Green's mens clothing, Strouse Drug, Barosty Drug, Woller Hardware, Auto Boys TV and auto parts, Edward's mens clothing and Dr. Katz foot doctor.

*Research by Harold Mitchener*

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## Lenape Program

Last month our program about the people from the Lenape Nation living in Bucks County was well attended. Our speaker, Barbara Michalski, known as Blue Jay, gave us great insight into the current life of the people of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania as well as some of their past history. She belongs to the Tribe of the Turkey Clan and is one of the Storytellers of the Nation as well as the chief of culture. Along with a power point presentation, Blue Jay brought artifacts from her people.



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## Two Bloating Boats Collide . . .

### *One was a steamboat and the other a canal barge*

There was a steamboat called the "John Warner" that burned coal for power. The John Warner was built in Wilmington, DE along with the "Twilight", "Thomas A. Morgan", "Columbia" and the "Edwin Forrest". The company that built them was Harlan and Hollingsworth. This was a first class company in management and construction.

By 1911 the John Warner was renamed the "Burlington". The steamboats connected Trenton, Bordentown, Bristol, Burlington and traveled to Philadelphia on regularly scheduled routes. Author Washington Irving used the steamboat from Philadelphia to come to Bristol to visit actor Thomas Cooper who lived at 722 Radcliffe Street. Irving was impressed that the journey was only an hour and it was a smooth journey. It was much more comfortable than by coach or train.

On April 12, 1875 a canal barge loaded with

anthracite coal for the "John Warner" broke lines holding the barge and slipped into the river when the tide was low. It caused a hole in the iron plates of the "Warner" and water started to rush into the lower cabin. The crew used seat cushions to plug up the hole. First Company #1, presently called Bristol Fire Company at Wood and Market Streets, was called to help pump the water out. With the aid of the boat's engine, the "Warner" was able to reach Philadelphia without sinking. In Philadelphia it was brought to a dry dock and a patch was placed on the hole. The "Warner" was able to resume her regular trip the next day. Fortunately the dry dock in Philadelphia was only 19 miles from Bristol. Once automobiles and faster trains and bus service became popular the steamboats stopped being used.

*Grundy Library Historical Collection*

*Harold Mitchener*



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## Bristol Memories

Recent articles in the Gazette, reminded me that Bristol, in the 1940s and 1950s, was really a rural country town, surrounded mostly by farms and undeveloped woodlands, before the Fairless Steel plant, Fairless Hills, and Levittown construction began in 1951-52. Harold Mitchener's article in the March Gazette summarized rural Bristol in 1941. My memories are a little later, generally from 1944 onward.

During the early 1940s in Bristol, many families did not have an automobile. Those that did, usually had only one. Often a car would be shared between the father and his sons' families. My grandfather bought a car that was used by both my father and uncle before they had a car of their own. When he wanted to go somewhere, either my father or uncle would usually drive.

There was not really a great need for cars, since most workers were close to their work place and could, and did walk to work. Many that worked out of town, commuted by bus or train. Parochial school students that went either to Philadelphia or Trenton after eighth grade had the same choice. Not a problem to walk to the bus stop or train station. After detraining they then walked to school or work.

It was not until after World War II that more families were able to afford the cars that became available. Beginning in the 1950s some families even got a second car, but this was generally because a working child was still living at home. In the 1960s a second car might be purchased since a couple both worked, or needed to have the entire family more mobile. More work was also out of town and public transportation less available to many locations.

In Bristol during the 1940s through the 1950s generally meant, that if you went somewhere in town, you walked. We never even gave it a thought. We walked to school beginning in the first grade (no kindergarten yet) and continued until graduating from High School. Most of us that lived in Harriman went home for lunch each day the entire time, so we made four trips a day. The kids from the other wards did the same until they went to high school. Then most of them ate lunch in the cafeteria, so they only made two trips a day. Art Younglove's article in the September 2021, Gazette tells how he and the other parochial school students hoofed it to Saint Marks and Saint Anns.

Any outside activity created a reason for walking. Going to scout meeting, cadet practice, movies, or any other motivation to be on the move meant walking. Often one might start out alone and be joined by others as they

walked to their goal. The reverse trip was often a group starting out then diminished on the homeward trip. The walk in either direction with a group was a social learning experience, since both boys and girls were often together for these walks. A popular activity, for teenage girls on Friday nights, was a walk to Mill Street, walk both sides once or twice, then walk to O'Boyle's restaurant near Green Lane for a snack.

In the late 1940s, a classmate's father decided that we were not getting enough walking during the week, so he started a hiking club on Saturday's mornings. The club hiked out of Bristol several miles in a different direction most weeks. We often used the canal tow path to begin walks that lasted most of the day. Farmers did not mind having us cross their land as we stayed out of the croplands and used wooded areas to have a lunch time camp fire. There were small county stores in every direction, where we could stop for a Kerns soda and Tasty Cake products. Those walks gave us a useful knowledge of the areas outside of town.

Sue Watkins article in the April Gazette edition discussed shopping in Bristol in the 1950s, and was spot on. Mill Street boomed and the major grocery stores were inundated by the increased area population. As a teenager I worked part time at the A&P on Pond Street. It was at the time Fairless Hills and Levittown were still under construction. The Acme and A&P in Bristol initially got most of that grocery business. Groceries were moving out of the store almost faster than we could stock the shelves. The volume on the weeks that Fairless Steel plant workers got paid, set store records. In order to keep the stock-outs to a minimum, a night shift was added to replenish inventory, while the store was closed. Volume did fall off when Penn Fruit and Food Fair opened in Levittown. Those were stores familiar to the Levittowner's that moved from Philadelphia.

Although Mill Street volume fell off in the late 1950s, many of the family stores did remain active thru the 1960s and in to 1970s. After we purchased our first home, furniture and appliances were from Mill Street stores. We got to know to know the owners at Dries, Richmond's, and Spencer's, it was nice to be recognized when entering their stores. The same was true for clothing and shoes at Girardi's, Maria Shoppe, Marty Greene's, Popkin's, and Wagner's. We did know many of the other merchants and their staff as our parents also shopped on Mill Street. I remember the close personal contacts with those store owners that has rarely been repeated since leaving Bristol.

*Submitted by Sam Black*

### ***A special Note:***

We encourage members to notify BCHF if they are planning a vacation and having mail forwarded. If you forward your mail due to vacation or temporary relocation, the Gazette will not be forwarded as it is bulk mail. Instead it will be returned to BCHF and charged a return postage rate. After time and with several returns, this becomes a drain on our budget. Thanks for understanding.

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## Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **May 1893** issues of THE BUCKS COUNTY GAZETTE.

### 5/4 – LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

The milkmen have reduced the price of milk to 6 cents 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 base ball grounds. America’s National Entertainment! PAWNEE BILL’S HISTORIC WILD WEST. Seats for everyone. Ladies and children our special care. Admission 50 cents. 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. 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.”

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 base ball grounds.

“Decoration Day Prices. Cheapest plants in town. 7 Geraniums, 50 cts.; 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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## BCHF Calendar of Events For 2023

**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., followed by police-led cruise from Radcliffe & Mill Sts. to Green Lane See [bristoldaycarshow.com](http://bristoldaycarshow.com) for details.

**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 article in main section of this Gazette.

**AUGUST.** Sun., 8/13, 2 to 4 PM. Annual Peach Social at BCHF air-conditioned headquarters. Fresh, sliced peaches and hand-dipped vanilla ice cream served over angel food cake. \$8 /person. **Take-out or Eat-in.** Event benefits awards to Bristol High School graduates. More info in June Gazette.

*continued on next page*



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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## BCHF Calendar of Events For 2023 - *Continued*

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

**AUGUST.** Tues., 8/22. Luncheon cruise on "River Lady" followed by free time on the boardwalk in Asbury Park. \$115 for BCHF members; \$118 for non-members. For flyer/reservation form call 215 788-9408. Deadline is June 15.

**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. Again this year, sailboat tours will be offered by the Schooner North Wind, a 75-foot vessel, owned by the Gloucester City Sail (GCS). a volunteer-led NJ non-profit. 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.

**NOVEMBER** Tues., 11/21, 7 PM. Presentation by long-term member of the Titanic Historical Society and respected Titanic historian David Kaplan. Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters.

**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](http://www.bristolhistory.org).

Follow us on Instagram - -

[IG@bristol\\_historic\\_foundation](https://www.instagram.com/IG@bristol_historic_foundation)

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