



The Gazette



Published by the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Box 215, Bristol, PA 19007

VOL. 43

Sponsoring Historic Bristol Day—Third Saturday of Each October

No. 9

BCHF is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit, all volunteer Organization.

NOVEMBER 2025

President's Corner

Historic Bristol Day

Historic Bristol Day on October 18, 2025, was a tremendous success. Many community members, individual volunteers, and BCHF members—along with representatives from the school district, borough government, and other local organizations—generously contributed their time and effort to make this event possible. The sunny weather was greatly appreciated.

Various places across the borough were filled with visitors who enjoyed exploring Bristol's rich history and the many attractions offered as part of the celebration. The BCHF Executive Board extends its sincere and heartfelt thanks to all who participated and supported this event. It was a wonderful opportunity for residents and visitors alike to engage with our community's heritage and to celebrate the enduring spirit of Bristol.

Sadly, the organization also mourns the passing of one of its longest-serving board members, Mr. Harold Mitchener, who passed away on October 7, 2025. A remembrance of Mr. Mitchener is included in this issue of The Gazette and another remembrance is posted online at <https://grundylibrary.org/harold-carol-mitchener/>.

Looking ahead, the Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 19, at 7:00 PM. The program will feature a presentation on the history of the Puerto Rican community in Bristol.

Jesse Walker

Sagolla Watercolor won by Retired Librarian

Joe Sagolla's watercolor of the Grundy clock tower was won by Denise Kolber in a raffle immediately after the close of Historic Bristol Day. The watercolor shows the clock tower and its reflection in the canal in muted tones. The painting was widely admired by the passing crowds on Historic Bristol Day so that we had a record sale of raffle tickets.

Denise, who recently retired from the Grundy Library, was thrilled to receive the news. We hope that Denise and her family enjoy the painting, and we thank artist Joe Sagolla for his very generous donation of this lovely framed watercolor.



In Memory of Harold D. Mitchener

A True Keeper of Bristol's Story



It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Harold D. Mitchener, a beloved Bristol historian, educator, and lifelong member of the Bristol Cultural & Historical Foundation. For decades, Harold dedicated himself to preserving and sharing the stories that make our town so special. His gentle presence, sharp memory, and deep love of history helped shape not only the BCHF, but the way so many of us see Bristol itself.

Harold was a Bristolian through and through — born and raised here, educated in our schools, and deeply rooted in the people and places that defined this community. After graduating from Bristol High School in 1956, he went on to earn his degree from West Chester University and later a master's from Trenton State College. His love of learning naturally led him into education, where he spent his career teaching social studies and geography

in the Bensalem School District. His lessons, much like his life, were filled with stories of people and places, always reminding students that history isn't just something we read — it's something we live.

For those who knew Harold through the Bristol Cultural & Historical Foundation, his impact is immeasurable. Alongside his beloved wife, Carol, Harold gave countless hours to preserving the town's past. Together they wrote, researched, and collected an extraordinary archive of Bristol's people, homes, and events — now carefully preserved at the Grundy Library Archives as the Carol & Harold Mitchener Collection. The Mitcheners' names have become synonymous with local history in Bristol, and rightly so. They didn't just document the past — they made it come alive.

Harold's service to BCHF spanned decades. He once served as President, and for more than thirty years, he edited the organization's newsletter — ensuring that each issue reflected the heart and heritage of Bristol. His articles often reminded us that the buildings we pass by every day, the street names we take for granted, and the stories we sometimes forget are all pieces of who we are. He wrote with curiosity, care, and a deep affection for this town and its people.

Even after the passing of his dear wife Carol in 2020, Harold continued their shared mission. He honored her memory by continuing to write, share, and preserve Bristol's story — always in the quiet, steady way that defined him. His life was proof that one person's dedication can leave a lasting imprint on an entire community.

Harold's absence will be deeply felt at BCHF meetings, Historic Bristol Day, and in the pages of our publications. Yet, we take comfort in knowing that his voice lives on — in the articles he wrote, the memories he captured, and the inspiration he gave to all who care about Bristol's history. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends. May we honor his memory by continuing the work he loved so dearly — celebrating Bristol's past and ensuring its stories are never forgotten.



The 14th Annual Bristol Day Car Show was a huge success. There were 165 amazing cars registered, and the weather couldn't have been better, with sunshine, a cool breeze and plenty of shining chrome. There was an amazing number of attendees passing through, enjoying the cars and voting for their favorite classic and antique car. The Best of Show trophy went to Mark Roberts with a 1957 fuel injected Corvette. The first place People's Choice trophy for antiques went to Don McMillan with a 1957 Ford Thunderbird originally owned by Frank Sinatra. Don always wears a hat like that worn by old Blue Eyes. Don won Best of Show at our 2024 show. The second place People's Choice trophy for antiques went to Marc Dubus a well-known Bristol muralist with a 1987 Chevrolet El Camino. The third place People's Choice trophy for antiques went to Tony Mangiaracina for a 1935 Ford Tudor Street Rod. Tony is a Bristol boy and retired teacher from Bristol High School. The first place People's Choice for classics went to Sean Smith for a 2015 Chevrolet Corvette. The second place People's Choice trophy for classics went to Vince Modes for a 2023 Chevrolet Corvette. The third place People's Choice trophy for classics went to Steve Smith for a 2023 Dodge Charger.



As always, the Bristol Middle School teachers under the direction of Michele Hager provided the food. They had coffee with donuts, bagels, and breakfast sandwiches in the morning. For lunch they had sausage and pepper sandwiches and hot dogs along with Michele's famous brownies and all kinds of candy for dessert.

This year Bristol's Lincoln Project presentation was a special feature of the show. The Lincoln Legacy stop, both a unique art experience and an interactive tribute, celebrates Abraham Lincoln's historic visit to Bristol en route to his 1861 Inauguration. There were two presentations given by Bill Pezza of "Raising the Bar" at 11 AM and 2PM.



Living Wax Museum on Historic Bristol Day



Students from Miss Moller's Snyder-Girotti Gifted and Enrichment Program, grades 3 to 6, put on a living Wax Museum, on Historic Bristol Day. This year's focus was on Bristol community members who have made an impact on the community or on education. Students did research on the person and then presented their projects on the back lawn of the Grundy Library.





HISTORIC BRISTOL DAY 2025



Our member sponsors for Historic Bristol Day are:

Jose Acevedo	John G. Hodgkinson	Linda Rowan
Mary Antonelli	Bev & Ed Howley	Jan Ruano
Cynthia Mancuso & Richard Apanervicz	Dr. Joanne Hullings	Charles & Dolores Sampsel
Nancy M. Brown	Marie Hutchinson	Mrs. C.M. Severi
Darlene Carey	Evelyn Ifkovitz	Maryann & John Smoyer
Arlene Carrello	Clarence King	Raquel Vertucio
Bill & Rose Cattani	Anna & Joe Larrisey	Anne Walp
Vincent & Alice Cordisco	Harold Mitchener	Bob & Pauline White
Mary Jo D'Agostino	Rev. Dennis Mooney	Helen Younglove
Claire King & Robin DeCosta	Mary Jane & Isadore Morici	Nancy Maren Yurgevich
Mary & Mark Gesualdi	Angela A. Nem	Gene & Phyllis
Trish Granda	Phyllis Pavone	Honoring the Dixon Family Ancestors
Andrea Harvie	Stephen C Halpert & Richard Lau	
	Nick Rizzo	

A Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

PLATINUM PARTNERS

Bristol Borough Council
Grundy Foundation
Trinseo

SILVER PARTNERS

Access Credit Union
Blue Chip Copy Center
CBM 1946
Drs. Angelo & Melinda Ratini
Maureen M Scanlin Real Estate
Phinny Magee's Pub
Radcliffe Cafe
RHR Mechanical Contractors
Saint Mark & Saint Ann Parish
State Representative Tina Davis
Wade Funeral Home

BENEFACTORS

Harriman United Methodist Church
J.U.S. - Josefina's Unisex Salon
Spotlight Holy Temple
The Bagel Joint

IN KIND DONATIONS

Bristol Borough Council
Bristol Borough School District
Grundy Foundation
Janice Rhodes
King George II Inn
Marty Shively
Michael Crossan
Penny Carmasine
Raising The Bar

ANCHORS AWEIGH

Sail from Philadelphia on Norwegian Cruise Line's "Norwegian Jewel" to Bermuda and Charleston, April 30 to May 7. Rates per person, double occupancy, range from \$1,710 to \$2,283 and include several perks. A Passport is required. An initial deposit of \$350 pp double or \$700 single is required to secure reservations and assign cabins. Final payment is due by November 28.

For a detailed flyer, call Janice Rhodes at 215-781-0483 or print it from BCHF's website, <http://www.bristolhistory.org>. For reservations, contact Grand American Tours in Morton, PA, at 800-423-0247.

Or you may consider sailing on Celebrity Cruise Line's "Best of Greece" cruise, August 29 to September 7. The itinerary includes a pre-night stay in Athens and ports-of-call including Athens, Greece; Ephesus, Turkey; Santorini, Rhodes, Mykonos and Thessaloniki, Greece. Rates, which include round-trip airfare from Philadelphia, range from \$5,007 to \$5,821 pp double. A Passport is required.

For a detailed flyer, call Janice Rhodes at 215-781-0483 or print it from <http://www.bristolhistory.org>. For reservations, contact Grand American Tours at 800-423-0247.

Watch future issues of The Gazette for information on BCHF's plans for 2026's day trips.

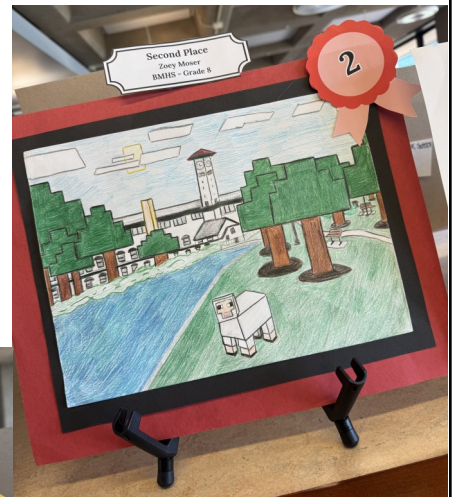
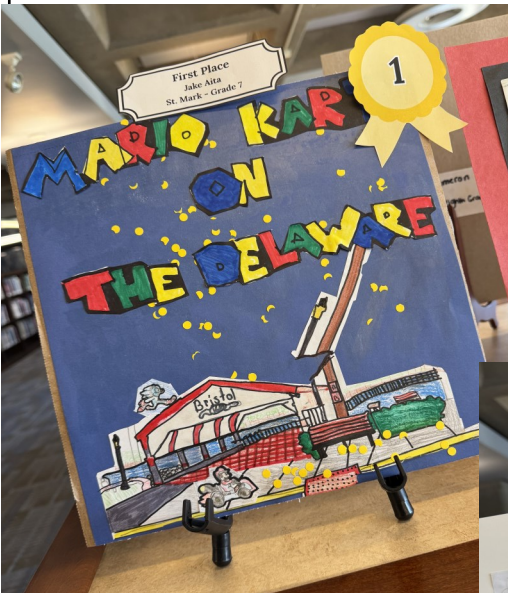
"WAS THE DECK STACKED AGAINST HIM?"

Join us at BCHF headquarters at 7 p.m., Tuesday, November 25, when Titanic historian David Kaplan will take the stage to talk about Capt. Edward J. Smith's boyhood days in Hanley, England, to his final days on the Titanic.

We ask that donations of paper goods or hygiene products be made to the Food Pantry of the First United Methodist Church of Bristol.

Once again an art contest was held for students in
Grades 6-8 at St. Mark and Bristol schools.

The theme was Bristol
portrayed as a video game.



What Do You Know About Bristol Borough

By Harol Mitchener

Did you know that the first railroad to Bristol was in 1834 and to reach Philadelphia the train went down Market Street to the river and then a steamboat to the passengers to Philadelphia.

The first school was on Wood Street between Mulberry and Walnut Streets.

The second school, built in 1854, was on Otter Street (across from the present day Molden Funeral Home). The former school building now has another use.

St. Mark school built in 1888 was across Radcliffe Street from the Grundy Museum.

St. Ann school on Logan Street was built in 1920.

The oldest building used for worship in the borough is the Friend's Meeting House (Quaker) 1711.

The oldest inn is the King George II Inn, which opened in 1681. The foundation of the original inn is under the present Inn which was built in 1765.

The present post office was built in 1914 to be closer to the railroad station. The Turnpike Bridge opened in the spring of 1956.

The oldest Fire company is the Bristol Fire Company at the corner of Wood and Market Streets.

When the town hall at Market Street facing Radcliffe Street became too small a second story was added to the Bristol Fire Company at Wood and Market streets.

When the Grundy family moved to Bristol to operate their mill they lived in a three-story mansion at Jefferson Ave. and Pond St. Later they moved to 610 Radcliffe St. Senator Grundy served in the Senate in the national Capital in Washington D. C.

Green Lane was originally called Bloomsdale Lane. Landreth seed, tree and plant business came to Bristol in 1847.

When they decided to construct U.S. 13 in front of the present Golden Eagle Diner soil from an island in Silver Lake was removed and used for the foundation.

The well-known Michael Dougherty from the American Civil War was a Congressional Medal of Honor Winner and member of the Borough Council who lived at 234 Dorrance Steet. A statue of him is at the lagoon of the canal on Jefferson Ave.

Leedom's Field used for football and baseball is where the present Snyder-Girotti school is located.

Across Beaver Street Mr. Leedom had a rug Factory where the Grundy Ice rink is located.

The canal, started in 1827, had 24 locks to bring coal from Easton to Bristol. Easton is about 168 feet in elevation above Bristol. That is about the height of the Grundy Factory clock tower. The canal barges brought anthracite coal to burn in home heaters and for operating machines in the factories. The last barge on the canal was in October 1931.

A pipe factory on Radcliffe Street made pipes for the Panama Canal.

Before the present Grundy library was opened a library building stood on the present parking lot for the library at Dorrance and Radcliffe St.

The present Bristol High School opened in 1923 when Harriman was made a part of Bristol Borough. The portion of the bulking along Wilson Ave. was added in the 1960s.

In the park at the river is a statue of Harriet Tubman. Harriet worked on the Underground Railroad and brought slaves north. Harriet never lived in Bristol but there are three families (Taylor, Ross and Davis) in Bristol related to Harriet.

Seabird Drive gets its name from a factory along the river that made planes called Seabird that could land on the water.

Sources:

Grundy Library Archives

History of Bristol Borough 1911 by Doron Green

Images of Bristol by Harold and Carol Mitchener, 2000

LYNDHURST MANSION TRIP

All seats have been filled but we will be glad to put you on the waiting list for the December 4 bus trip to Tarrytown, NY, where we'll tour and dine at the lavishly decorated Lyndhurst Mansion, which sits on its own 67-acre park beside the Hudson River. See for yourself whether or not it deserved USA Today's title of one of "The Ten Best Historic Holiday Tours."

The bus will depart from the Grundy Recreation Center's parking lot at 9 a.m. sharp and return at approximately 6:30 p.m. A hot buffet luncheon will be served in one of the mansion's private rooms.

The all-inclusive cost of the trip is \$158 for BCHF members and \$168 for non-members. Contact Deborah Pinney at 215-788-7537 to check on current availability..

OUT OF THE PAST

The following items were excerpted from the Bristol Courier November 1925. Price 2¢

November 2 – The dormitory and print shop at Holy ghost College on Bristol Pike were destroyed in a fire early Sunday. Damage was estimated between \$50,000 and \$75,000. No one was injured.

1500 people including children, faculty, and school directors marched through Bristol urging a vote in favor of the loan to build the high school addition.

November 3 – Voters today select county and town officials and approve or reject the school loan.

November 4 – The school loan was approved by a small majority. Republicans in Bristol Borough made a big sweep.

November 6 – King Tut's body has been found in a gold tomb.

November 9 – Maurice J. Keating, Third Ward Councilman for 20 years died at home after a long illness.

Robert J. Bracken Post #382 American Legion will hold the seventh annual Armistice Ball in St. Mark Auditorium on Nov. 11. Cost \$1.

November 10 – Borough Council voted to take action to remove the Buckley Mill due to the ruins being a danger and detriment to the community.

November 11 – The Needlework Guild met and noted a record collection of 3020 garments.

Members of Goodwill Fire Company #3 captured first prize at the parade in Mount Holly, NJ.

November 12 – Singer Meats has fresh ground hamburger 20¢/lb. and Sirloin Steak 35¢/lb., & Rib Roasts 25¢/lb.

Lit Brothers 34th Anniversary Sale – Racoon Coats \$245- \$325, & Muskrat Coats \$185- \$265.

November 13 – Tag Day to be held on Nov. 14. Students will sell tags to support the Athletic Fund.

At last a Radio without batteries. All you need is electricity in your home. Complete set costs \$125 tubes, and loudspeaker included. Bristol Army & Navy Store 211 Mill St.

November 16 – Public is invited to visit the Bristol schools this week during education week.

November 17 – L. L. Kinney, a real estate agent sold the large tract of land on Lincoln Highway to the Philadelphia Speedway Corporation. They plan to build an automobile race course with a grandstand expected to hold 50,000 people.

November 19 – The Huff-Daland Company tested it's first seaplane built in Bristol. It took off in the river and flew over the factory for 5 minutes and then landed in the river.

The Bristol Postmaster advised the early mailing of Christmas packages.

November 20 – Queen Alexandra of England suffered a heart attack and is not expected to survive.

The government decided to sell the 24 arsenal buildings known as the Tullytown Ordinance Reserve Depot.

Dries Furniture – Simmons Bed \$22.50 (Bed, Mattress and Springs included).

November 24 – Negotiations to settle the anthracite coal strike will resume soon.

Thanksgiving Frolic of the #2 Fire Company will take place at St. James Parish House tomorrow. Dinner is served at 6 PM followed by entertainment.

Announcing the Grand Opening on Nov. 25 at 7 A.M. at the first up-to-date service station on the new highway in Bristol at Pond and Mulberry Streets.

November 25 – Mill Street Business Men's Association to hold a window decorating contest to encourage better window dressing. Judging on Dec. 4th.

Football Thursday Nov 26. Bristol A. A. vs Frankford Steel Jackets on Sullivan Field at 2:30 PM.

November 27 – Frankford held Bristol A. A. to a scoreless tie.

November 28 – Bristol's Old Town Hall built in 1831 was hastily constructed to receive a bequest of \$200 from Samuel Scotton. \$3,000 was spent to get the \$200 gift.

November 30 – The first marker of Kings Highway is located in Bristol at Radcliffe and Walnut Streets on the property of the Protective Order of the Elks. The Elks Lodge discovered the marker after purchasing the property to build their present home.



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 1228

Langhorne, PA

19047

BCHF Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER. Wed., 11/19, 7:00 PM. BCHF's annual meeting at BCHF headquarters. Election of Board members, followed by a program. Please note the new time. Light refreshment. No fee.

NOVEMBER. Tues., 11/25, 7 PM at BCHF headquarters. Return of Titanic historian David Kaplan, speaking on "Captain Smith: Was the Deck Stacked against Him?" Donations to the FUMC Food Pantry of Bristol will be greatly appreciated.

DECEMBER. Thurs., 12/4. Bus trip to the Lyndhurst Mansion in Tarrytown, NY, with a hot buffet luncheon in one of the mansion's private rooms. \$158 for BCHF members; \$168 for non-members. See website Bristolhistory.org for trip flyer/reservation form or call 215-781-0483. Reservation deadline:10/31.

APRIL-MAY, 2026. Bermuda & Charleston cruise sailing from Philadelphia aboard the "Norwegian Jewel", April 30 to May 7. \$1,710 to \$2,283 pp double. Initial deposit of \$350 required; balance due by Nov. 28. Passport required. For a detailed flyer, call 215-781-0483 or print it from <http://www.bristolhistory.org>.

BCHF Headquarters are at 321 Cedar Street, Bristol.

For current information about activities and events, check our website at www.bristolhistory.org

Email us at bchf2157819895@gmail.com Follow us on Instagram - - IG@bristol_historic_foundation

THE GAZETTE is a publication of the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Inc. — Linda Rowan, Editor

Post Office Box 215 · Bristol · Pennsylvania · 19007 · 215-781-9895

Articles for this issue of THE GAZETTE contributed by: Helen Younglove, Harold Mitchener, Jesse Walker, Mark Gesualdi, Mary Gesualdi, Michael Crossan, & Deb Pinney