



The Gazette



VOL 44
No. 2

Published by the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Box 215, Bristol, PA 19007
Sponsoring Historic Bristol Day—Third Saturday of Each October
BCHF is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit, all volunteer Organization.

FEBRUARY 2026

President's
Corner

Election of Officers

At our recent board meeting, the following new officers were elected: President, Jesse Walker; Vice President, Nick Rizzo, Corresponding Secretary, Deborah Pinney and Treasurer, Donna Albright. Francine Leinheiser is the new recording secretary and Linda Rowan is the Gazette editor. Diane Davidson is the chairperson for the Ways and Means committee. Other board members along other individuals help this foundation in various ways. The help of everyone is greatly appreciated.

The BCHF is looking forward to celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States. In honor of this anniversary, we will have presentation by Michael Harris on Sunday February 15, 2026, at 2 pm about Revolutionary War fighting along the Delaware River. Additional upcoming events can be found in this issue and on our website.

Please consider renewing your membership.

Sincerely *Jesse Walker*

Membership Renewal

If you have not already done so, annual renewal membership dues for BCHF are due. We appreciate your past support and trust that you will continue to do so. Dues are the same as last year, \$15 for individuals, \$25 for families and \$60 for businesses.

You can pay your dues directly on line by going to our website at www.bristolhistory.org or by sending a check to BCHF, P.O. Box 215, Bristol, PA.

Thank you
Jan Ruano
Membership Chairperson

We Need You For The 50th Anniversary

By Michael Crossan

Historic Bristol Day has always been more than just an event on the calendar. For decades, it has been a tradition that brings people together in the heart of Bristol Borough and reminds us what makes this town such a special place to live, work, and raise a family. It is the kind of day that feels familiar in the best way, where neighbors run into each other, families make memories, and visitors get to experience the charm, history, and pride that Bristol carries so well.

In 2026, Historic Bristol Day reaches a major milestone as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of this beloved community tradition. Fifty years of gathering on our streets, celebrating our town, supporting local organizations, and showcasing the best of what Bristol has to offer is something worth honoring in a big way. It is also a perfect moment to reflect on how much Historic Bristol Day has grown over the years, while still holding onto the same spirit that made it meaningful from the very beginning.

What makes this anniversary even more exciting is that it aligns with two major historical celebrations taking place across our region and nation. The Bucks250 and America250 commemorations will recognize 250 years since our country's founding, and Bristol Borough is the perfect setting for that story. Our town has always carried a strong connection to American history, and this once in a generation moment gives us the opportunity to celebrate not only the past, but the community we continue to build together.

Historic Bristol Day has become a day that captures the best parts of Bristol. It fills the Borough with energy and brings people out to enjoy everything from music and food to vendors, family activities, and community organizations. It

has always been a place where local groups can connect with the public, where small businesses and makers can shine, and where families can spend the day enjoying the simple experience of being together in a lively, welcoming environment. Year after year, it is the kind of event that people look forward to because it feels like Bristol at its best.

As we prepare for this landmark 50th anniversary celebration, we are also looking for community members who want to be part of making it happen. Events like this don't come together on their own, and the success of Historic Bristol Day has always been built on the dedication of volunteers, committee members, and people who simply care about their town and want to contribute. With so many exciting possibilities ahead for 2026, we will need more helping hands than ever, and we would love to welcome new faces to join the effort.

The chairpeople for this year's Historic Bristol Day are Michael Crossan, Suzie Antonelli, Joe Dugan, and Alison McHugh. Together, we are committed to honoring the tradition that Historic Bristol Day has become, while also working to make this 50th anniversary celebration a memorable one for everyone who attends.

If you are interested in getting involved, whether through committee work, volunteering, or offering support in any way, we encourage you to reach out. Please email Mcrossan@bbsd.org and include your name and telephone number so we can add you to our contact list. This is a special year for Bristol Borough, and we hope you'll consider being part of it.

Railroad Maps of Bristol by Jesse Walker

Railroads have a long and important history in Bristol dating from the 1830s. Books, photographs, and maps provide information about Bristol's railroads. One great resource is the Grundy Archive's railroad pictures that can be accessed at the following link: <https://grundyarchive.org/items/browse?tags=Pennsylvania+Railroad>

Sanborn Company Fire Insurance maps, United State Geological Survey Topographic maps, county atlas, and other historic maps illustrate aspects of the railroads in Bristol; however, the details depicted are limited in these cartographic sources. The Interstate Commerce Commission created detailed railroad maps in Bristol and throughout the United States. This mapping and data gathering effort by the railroads and government started during World War I and continued into the mid-twentieth century.

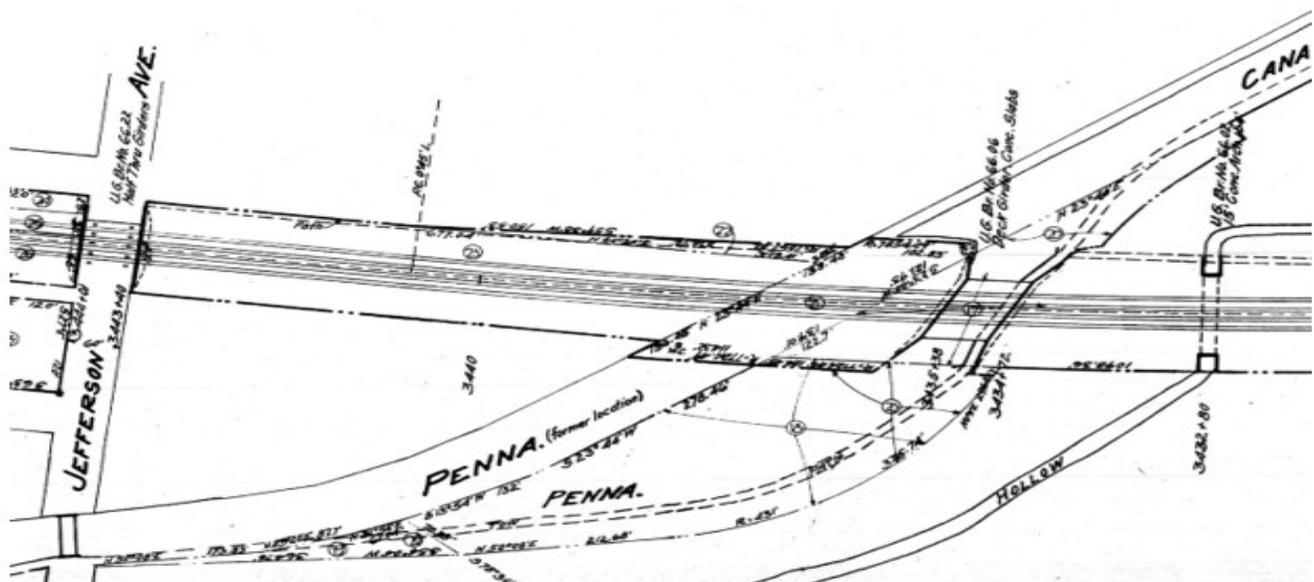
The earliest Interstate Commerce Commission railroad maps in Bristol date to 1918. These maps were updated into the late 1940s. The maps in Bristol depict a variety of things such as railroad property, tracks, bridges, towers, railroad buildings, tool sheds, road crossings, railroad signal bridges over tracks, roads and other cartographic information. In Bristol, the primary areas covered by the maps include Old Route 13, Pond Street (from Mill Street to Durance Street), the walking path through the borough, and the Amtrak/SEPTA railroad corridor. Certain details on these maps are also depicted on fire insurance maps and other sources. However, many details on these Interstate Commerce Commission maps are not recorded on other types of cartographic sources.

The 1918 Interstate Commerce Commission map of the canal crossing the Amtrak/SEPTA railroad exemplifies details not available on Sanborn Company Fire Insurance maps. This location is near the lagoon and northeast of Jefferson Avenue. This 1918 map depicts how the prism (i.e. alignment) of the canal changed when the Pennsylvania Railroad constructed the elevated railroad alignment. A note on the 1918 map states "PENNA. (former location) CANAL (Delaware div)", which shows the old route of the canal. The towpath was also adjusted. The canal predates the railroad at this location by approximately 70 years.

If you are walking along the towpath of the canal towards Green Lane, look up on the railroad bridge and see the iron plate with information about the construction date and manufacturer. Also looking at aerial images of the canal, it is evident how the canal prism was altered by the railroad.

The full citation of this map is "Right of Way and Track Map, Philadelphia & Trenton R.R. Operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad, Lessee Stations 3417+80 to Station 3470+60, June 30, 1918 (PRR.P&T.v1.0.PA-09 1918 MP66 – Bristol)."

The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society (<https://www.prrths.org/>) is an organization focused on preserving the history of the Pennsylvania Railroad. This society maintains digital copies of the Interstate Commerce Commission's maps. Please see this link for more information on these railroad maps and how to obtain digital copies: <https://railsandtrails.com/ICC/default.htm> These maps can also be obtained from the National Archives, but they are not available directly from government's websites. Moreover, these maps are not typically found on public websites.



1918 Interstate Commerce Commission map.

Looking Ahead to Upcoming Programs

Sunday, February 15, 2026 @ 2PM.

Michael Harris presents "An Overview of the Fighting Along the Delaware River in 1777. Michael C. Harris is a historian who wrote *Fighting for Philadelphia*, a book about the battles along the Delaware River in 1777, including the fights at Fort Mercer and Fort Mifflin. Light refreshments will be served. Donation of \$5 per adult is suggested, students are free.

Sunday, March 22, 2026 @ 2PM. Carol Simon Levin will bring to life. Abigail Adams: Remembering the Ladies. Carol Simon Levin is a professional storyteller, historical impersonator and NJ Council for the Humanities Scholar specializing in "Fascinating Women History Forgot." Light refreshments will be served. Donation of \$5 per adult is suggested, students are free.

Sailing Away

In the depths of winter do you have the urge to take a trip? It is not too late to sign up for the Bermuda cruise sailing from **Philadelphia**. Details below: **Don't delay!!!**



Sail **from Philadelphia** on Norwegian Cruise Line's "Norwegian Jewel," to Bermuda and Charleston, April 30-May 7, 2026. 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 pp single is required to secure reservations and assign cabins.

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. Mention that this is a BCHF cruise.

Later in the year have the opportunity to explore Greece on Celebrity Cruise Line's "Best of Greece" cruise, August 29 to September 7. **A bonus of this trip is free round-trip airfare from Philadelphia and a pre-night stay in Athens.**

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. Mention that this is a BCHF cruise.



Out of the Past

The following items were excerpted from the Bristol Courier February 1926. Price 2¢

February 2 – Automobile Show at the Trenton Armory Feb. 10 – 13.

February 3 – The League of Women Voters met on Tue. at the Wood Street School. They reviewed information about the happenings at the state legislature.

Did you know that Daniel Boone was born in Bristol Township? The Boone homestead was near the Hollow Creek.

February 4 – The Elks are hosting a get-together social for the employees of the Huff-Daland airplane Company. The intention is to make the new arrivals welcome to the community.

The first snow storm of the season blocked highways and railroad lines due to drifting.

February 5 – Abe Popkin at 418 Mill St. has Ladies Galoshes for \$2.45 & \$2.95

February 6 – The Travel Club had its annual reception for teachers at St. James Parish Building. They had musical entertainment and a speaker.

February 8 – February 15 will be the inauguration of transportation of mail by aircraft. Ford Motor Company has contracted for 2 routes – Detroit to Cleveland and Detroit to Chicago.

February 9 – At the Bristol Council meeting there was discussion of erecting a new bridge over the canal at Beaver St. A traffic light was requested for the intersection of Pond and Market St.

February 10 – Bristol Fish and Game Protective association held a successful meeting at the Riverside Theater. It included interesting talks for sportsmen and vaudeville entertainment.

For Sale at Lennox, Florida – Building lots \$250 and up, Farm sites \$1500 and up. Contact John J. Harkin Box 101 Tullytown, PA.

Elks Charity Ball to be held on Feb. 12 at St. Mark's Auditorium. Music by Al Hrisch's Orchestra.

February 11 – American Store – Rump or Round Roast – 30¢/lb., Sirloin Steak 48¢/lb.

The United States leads the world in telephones. The U. S. has 63% of all telephones in the world.

February 12 – The PA Coal Strike which began in Sept. 1925 is settled. It was the longest anthracite strike in history.

February 13 – Two hundred music lovers were treated to "Verdi Night" in Bristol. The event was held to benefit St. Ann's School.

Hobbs & La Rue were the successful bidders for the construction at the Bristol high School. John Smoyer heating contractor and George P. Bailey electrical contractors also won bids. The building is to be completed by Aug. 15 and will include 11 classrooms, an office and combined auditorium and gymnasium.

February 15 – Philadelphia Gas & Electric Company advertised, "Girls! Learn to Cook on a new Cabinet Gas Range.

February 16 – The annual Shrove Tuesday dance will be held by parishioners of St. Mark tonight in the auditorium. It will be the last social affair preceding Lent.

Robert W. Bracken Post No. 382 of the American Legion will honor ex-Servicemen of the Huff-Daland Company with a talk, Vaudeville act and refreshments.

February 17 – Firemen responded to 2 alarms on Tuesday, involving a defective flue and chimney.

Bristol Borough had a community dinner and reported on progress made in 1925. New industry was welcome amid the progress.

February 18 – Trenton Mayor spoke at the Rotary Club on the value of a deeper Delaware River.

February 20 – Students at the Washington St. School observed Washington's Birthday with a patriotic program of songs, poems, and a playlet.

February 22 – The film Phantom of the Opera starring Lon Chaney will be shown at the Forrest Theater for 3 days only.

February 23 – Motorists complain of children hitching rides on sleds to automobiles. Pond and Jefferson is the worst intersection for this.

February 24 – A deed has been recorded for 12 acres of land on Green Lane, for the construction of the Pacific Boiler Corp. It is expected to employ 200 men.

February 25 – Bucks County now has its own chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. An organization meeting was held in Doylestown.

February 26 – A freak storm hit Bristol with thunder and lightning. This was the second such storm in Feb. A flagpole at the shipyard was struck and burned.



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Calendar of Events For 2026

FEBRUARY Sun., 2/15, 2026 @ 2pm Michael Harris presents "An Overview of the Fighting Along the Delaware River in 1777". Light refreshments will be served. A donation of \$5 per adult is suggested. Students are free.

MARCH Sun., 3/22, 2026 @ 2pm– Carol Simon Levin portrays Abigail Adams in Remembering the Ladies. Light refreshments will be served. A donation of \$5 per adult is suggested. Students are free.

APRIL Sun., 4/26, 2-4 PM at BCHF Headquarters. Annual Spring Tea. More detail soon.

APRIL 30 – May 7 2026. Sail from Philadelphia on Norwegian Cruise Line's "Norwegian Jewel," to Bermuda and Charleston.

AUGUST 2026. 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.

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

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](https://www.instagram.com/IG@bristol_historic_foundation)

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