



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

JANUARY 2014

## FORTY-SEVEN AND COUNTING

Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation is beginning its 47th year serving the community. We welcome you to join us in meeting our mission of helping to provide an interest in history, art, music and literature. This makes us a little different from the regular historical society.

The Board of Directors of our foundation wishes everyone a very "Happy New Year - 2014". Our Board meetings are held on the Second Wednesday of the Month at 7:30 p.m. in our headquarters location at 321 Cedar St., Bristol. These meetings are open to members, guests and prospective members. The Board does

not meet in July or December.

The members of the Board of Directors for the year 2014 are as follows: Russell Angerman, Kathy Barniskis, Barbara Freer, Mary Kehoe, Anna Larrisey, Nancy Maren, Catherine McCarry, Gerry McCarry, Mary McIlvain, Harold Mitchener, Debra Pinney, Jeanette Ruano, Robin Simmers-Butrey and Helen Younglove. Officers for the year 2014 are Gerry McCarry - President; Jeanette Ruano - Vice President; Mary McIlvain - Corresponding Secretary; and Anna Larrisey - Treasurer. Cecilia Graff has been appointed as Secretary to the Board.

## Tea & Nursery Rhymes

Relive your childhood by attending BCHF's annual Tea, whose theme this year is "Mother Goose." The date is **Sunday, February 9 (3 to 5 p.m.)**; the place is BCHF headquarters, 321 Cedar Street. An afternoon of nostalgia is in store, as we see how many nursery rhyme verses we can recall. Tea co-chairs Harold & Carol Mitchener, along with members of the Ways & Means Committee and other volunteers, promise fun, favors and door prizes, in addition to the traditional Tea fare.

Ticket price is \$20 and, as announced in the November GAZETTE, ticket orders are being accepted by Helen Younglove at 215 788-9408 beginning at 9:00 am on Saturday, January 11th. Please note that seating capacity is limited to 64 people and tables, each accommodating four people, are pre-assigned. The committee always does its best to put groups as close together as possible and to meet any special needs that are brought to their attention in advance.

## Plan on Attending

The following two programs have been scheduled at BCHF headquarters for **2 p.m.** on the dates listed below:

**Sunday, January 26** - "The Music & Times of Downton Abbey," presented by Terri Evans, a former "Miss Alabama," performer in opera and Broadway, and an NYU Professor of Music and Music History. With the help of her husband, Grammy winner Marion Evans, Ms. Evans has put together this musical presentation which offers a look at the times and the music of the Edwardian period, World War I and the Roaring Twenties - all based on the popular Masterpiece PBS TV series, "Downton Abbey," whose fourth series begins this month.

Light refreshment will be served at the conclusion of the presentation. BCHF doors will open at 1:45 p.m. \$5 per

person admission will be collected at the door.

Attendees will have the opportunity of participating in a drawing for two single-day admission tickets to SESAME PLACE in Langhorne during the 2014 operating season. The tickets are valued at \$130.52

Sunday, March 30 - "John Adams Speaks: His Life & Times," presented by Joe Doyle of the ActorsNET. Mr. Doyle will portray our second president and one of our country's Founding Fathers.

Light refreshment will be served at the program's conclusion. \$3 per person admission will be collected at the door; students are admitted free.

For further information/directions, contact Helen Younglove at 215 788-9408.

## BCHF Calendar of Events for 2014

**JANUARY** - Sun., 1/26, 2 PM, "Music and Times of Downton Abbey" program by Terri Evans, former Broadway and Opera performer. Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. \$5 pp. Limited seating capacity; doors open at 1:45 p.m. Call 215 788-9408 for info.

**FEBRUARY** Sun., 2/9/2014, 3 - 5 PM. Annual Tea; "Mother Goose" Theme. BCHF headquarters. \$20/ticket. Reservations accepted at 215 788-9408 beginning 9 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 11.

**MARCH** - Sun., March 30, 2 PM. "John Adams Speaks: His Life & Times." 1st person portrayal by Joe Doyle of ActorsNET. Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. \$3 pp; students free. Call 215 788-9408 for info.

**MAY** Thurs., 5/15/2014. Bus trip to Historic Morristown, NJ. Guided tour of Speedwell where Samuel Morse invented the telegraph and Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, housing a collection of artwork by Thomas Nast, known as the "father of American political cartooning." Lunch at George & Martha's American Grill. \$90/BCHF member; \$93/non-member. Call 215 788-9408 for flyer/reservations.

**SEPTEMBER** - 9/14 through 18 2014 - 5 day/ 4 night bus trip to

Cape Cod, visiting Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, Historic Sandwich and Hyannis. 4 breakfasts & 4 dinners, lodging, all taxes; meal, guide & driver tips. \$655 pp, double occupancy. \$200 pp deposit upon booking; balance due by July 24, 2014. Call 215 788-9408 for flyer/reservations.

**OCTOBER** - Sat., 10/18, 10 am to 4 pm. 38th Historic Bristol Day. Fee for House Tour & Tea. For details, visit the BCHF website given below.

**NOVEMBER** - Wed., 11/19, 7:30 p.m. BCHF's annual business meeting, incl. election of Board members. Program & refreshments follow. BCHF headquarters. Free. Call 215 781-9895 for info.

**DECEMBER** - Wed., 12/10 or Tues., 12/9. Bus trip to Harrisburg, PA. Visit the Governor's Mansion decorated for the holidays, PA Capitol building and PA State Museum. Lunch included. Plans to be finalized in February.

- 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).

### Bristol Riverside Theater - 2014 Season

"Tuesdays With Morrie" - Jan. 28 thru Feb. 16, 2014 / "Laughter on the 23rd Floor - Mar. 18 thru Apr, 13

"Little Shop of Horrors" - May 6 thru June 8, 2014

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

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Photography: Helen Younglove and Mark Gesualdi

## SAGOLLA WATERCOLOR PAINTING WINNER

The winner of the Joseph Sagolla watercolor painting was Mary Nickels of Levittown. Her raffle ticket was pulled at the conclusion of Historic Bristol Day - 2013. Thanks to all who participated in this year's raffle.

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## Plexiglas And Major Bowes

On the southern border of Bristol Borough and mostly within Bristol Township was located a major chemical industry called Rohm & Haas. Dow Chemical presently occupies that site. Two men who started the company in the United States were from Germany. Bristol's plant opened in 1917. Over the decades of the 20th century, thousands of people were employed at this industry, (this writer included). The land for the former Bristol Township High School, known as Delhaas High School, was donated by the Rohm and Haas firm and the "Haas" name was applied to the school. The school building still stands but is presently used for offices and is adjacent to the Bristol campus of the Bucks County Community College on Veteran's Highway (PA route 413).

Dr. Rohm had invented a plastic product known as "Plexiglas" and produced it at Bristol. Its appearance was that of glass and it was strong and light resistant, but it differed from glass in that it was more transparent, much lighter in weight and would not break when dropped. The chemical used to make the product was known as methyl-methacrylate.

The airplane industry, especially during World War II, used Plexiglas because of the light weight and safety features. Windows and cockpit enclosures were two of the main uses in airplanes. It could be formed or molded into many shapes including artistic dishes, boxes, electrical insulators and various novelties in colored form.

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## A Note From Your Ways & Means Chairperson

HAPPY NEW YEAR! January finds our committee back in the swing of things after a welcome breather from Historic Bristol Day activities and the hectic holiday season. As always we are looking for new members to help us with coming events.

On Sunday, January 26th we open our doors to "The Music and Times of Downton Abbey", a pictorial with accompanying music from the widely popular PBS Series. Doors open at 1:45 and there will be refreshments after the program. That's when Ways & Means takes over. If you are able to bake light finger sweets, offer a cheese and cracker tray, or fruit, please contact me.

On Sunday, February 9th we hold our Annual Tea from 3 to 5. This year Carol Mitchener has chosen "Mother Goose" as her theme. We need many volunteers for this event. On Saturday, February 8th, we make our tea sandwiches, starting at noon. Carol provides the spreads and breads and we go to work! If you volunteer for this task, you'll need to bring a knife and cutting board. Please consider helping on Saturday.

We will also need bakers for the day of the tea. The desserts should be small finger sweets of any kind. They can be dropped off on Saturday, from noon to 2 or around 1:00 the day of the tea.

One of the more interesting items manufactured from Plexiglas was a "violin". The entire violin, except for the strings, was made of Plexiglas. The company also produced a clarinet and flute from the same material. A Plexiglas trio entertained at a dance in the Torresdale Country Club of Philadelphia in January of 1938 where a Philadelphia resident, Mr. Milton Brummer, played the violin.

He would soon appear on the Major Bowes radio show in New York City with his instrument and be introduced with his violin as playing a "glass full of music".

For those who could remember the well-known radio show, it was started and hosted by Edward Bowes (1874 - 1946). Mr. Bowes always wanted to be addressed as "Major Bowes" and had one of the most popular radio broadcasts in the United States during the 1930's and 1940's.

The "Major" had started managing the prestigious Capital Theater in New York City in the 1920's. His radio show began on the New York City station WHN and later moved to NBC and finally to CBS. The radio show sponsors, over the years, were Chase and Sanborn Coffee, Chrysler Auto Company and Old Gold Cigarettes.

When Major Bowes wanted to quickly dispatch an untalented performer, he would sound a loud bell (like one used in boxing) or a large metal gong. This gong later inspired a show known as the "Gong Show".

Of course, we'll need volunteers on Sunday! We usually start getting ready about 1:00. The tasks consist of setting the tables, dressing the buffet tables with goodies, making the tea and setting up the condiments' table. We need a greeter and coat room helper at the beginning of the tea. These 2 volunteers could come about 2:30. Hopefully these volunteers would stay and help replenish the sandwiches and tea for the first shift from 3:00 to 4:00. Two more volunteers are needed from 4:00 to 5:00 to replenish the tea and desserts.

We need tea pourers. Two tea tables are set up, so we'll need 4 volunteers for this task - 2 from 3:00 to 4:00 and 2 from 4:00 to 5:00. We sell what's leftover and could use 2 helpers for this. Come at 4:30 for this task.

At the end of the tea there's the ever popular clean-up. We use our best "china" and so there's plenty of clearing, washing, drying and stacking to do. If you can help with this, plan to come about 4:30.

**Ways & Means meets at BCHF headquarters on Cedar St. (in January, on the 4th Monday at 7:30 and in February on the 3rd Monday at 7:30.)**

**To offer help, contact: Kathy Barniskis at 215 943-0258 or kbarniskis@juno.com**

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## Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **January 1944** issues of THE BRISTOL COURIER.

1/3 - - GROUP LEFT HERE TODAY FOR THEIR EXAMINATION. 107 Men will be inducted into the Armed Services. Members of the "36 for Victory" were on hand to present the boys with gifts. Representatives of the Bracken Post were also present.

"There is Plenty To Do Before The War Is Through! Ammunition and materials must flow in a never-ending stream to our boys on land and sea. We have immediate openings for men and women as assembly workers, maintenance workers, stock movers in our Bath Road plant, Bristol, Pa., and at our U.S. Navy plant, Emilie, Pa. HUNTER MANUFACTURING CORP."

1/4 - - BRISTOL H.S. WILL PRY OFF THE LID OF ITS BASKETBALL SEASON TONIGHT AGAINST FLORENCE, N.J., HIGH. Coach Bill Bartholomew has picked the following to represent the "Bunnies" on the varsity squad: Marvin Collins, forward; Joe McDevitt, guard, Joe Elmer, forward; Henry VanLenten, center; Mickey Mandio, guard; "Reds" DeAngelo, guard; "Toby" Oriolo, guard.

"A&P Supermarkets . . . Ritz Crackers - - 1 lb. pkg., 21¢. Campbell's Tomato Soup - 10-1/2 oz. can, 9¢; Mrs. Filbert's Oleo-Margarine - 1 lb., 24¢; Top Quality Legs of Lamb - 38¢ lb. Fresh Ground Beef - 25¢ lb."

1/5 - - THREE SENIORS TO RECEIVE DIPLOMAS BEFORE INDUCTION. Three seniors at the Bristol High School, scheduled to graduate in June, will receive their diplomas previous to entering the armed forces of their country in February. The students, all in good standing in their class, are: Vito Bono, Lawrence Dougherty and Wendell Kehler.

1/8 - - ROHM & HAAS ADOPTS RETIREMENT INCOME PLAN. A monthly retirement income for life approximately equal to 40% of the employee's pay plus increased life insurance during active years, will be made possible for both hourly workers and salaried employees through a Pension Plan announced by Otto Haas, president of Rohm & Haas Company, Philadelphia chemical manufacturers.

"Tune to WTTM, Trenton, 920 on Your Dial. 2 P.M. Sunday, Hear Barnard's Music School of the Air of 447 Mill Street, Bristol."

1/11 - - BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTS OFFICERS; BUDGET PROPOSED. Dr. J. Fred Wagner was re-elected president; William J. Lefferts, secretary and treasurer; Howard I. James, solicitor; John S. Roberts, Jr., borough engineer, borough surveyor and building inspector. The budget will use the same tax rate as last year, \$1.10 per \$100 of assessed valuation, and will come up for final action at the February meeting of the council.

"HOUSE FOR SALE. On Radcliffe St. 6 rooms & bath. All conveniences. Newly re-modeled. Immediate possession. Price of \$5,900 is reasonable. Apply Francis J. Byers, 409 Radcliffe St."

1/12 - - OFFERS \$20 PRICE TO KILLER OF MOST FOXES. Bristol Fish & Game Ass'n Eager to Thin out Fox Population.

"Green Lane Homes - - Brand New Bungalows with Garage for Sale or Rent. Down Payments as Low as \$200.

Can obtain coal for renters and purchasers. Bristol Defense Homes, Inc., Bristol."

1/14 - WAR BOND DRIVE TO OPEN HERE TUESDAY. H.S. Band to Perform. Local Quota \$927.350. The opening of the nation's fourth war loan drive will get underway for Lower Bucks County at a mass war bond rally, Tuesday, at 11 a.m., at the community headquarters, McCrory's store, Mill Street.

"Women's Novelty Shoes on Sale! Monday, January 17 - 29. All Shoes \$3.00 or Less. Ration Free, according to new O.P.A. release. POPKIN'S SHOES, 129 Mill St."

1/18 - - SIXTH WARD FIREMEN PLAN TO BUILD STATION. Bristol Volunteer Fire Company No. 6, located in the sixth area, at its meeting on Thursday evening, perfected its organization for 1944 with the election of officers and also made plans to erect a fire house which, if plans do not go awry, will be on of the most pretentious and up-to-date fire houses in Bucks County.

"HELP WANTED. Men for warehouse and packing room work. Women for office work. Help an important industry in the war effort. D. LANDRETH SEED CO., Canal Street."

1/21 - - "BOWLING - - for enjoyment and leisure-time fun! Open bowling every Saturday and Sunday afternoon and evening. BRISTOL BOWLING CENTER, Farragut Avenue, east of Monroe Street."

"FACTORY-TO-YOU FURNITURE COMPANY, 229 Mill Street . . . War Worker's Outfit. 3 Piece Living Room Suite - \$139.00"

1/24 - - BACK FROM "FRONT" URGES BOND PURCHASE. Tells of Experiences. Back from participating in the African invasion, the invasion of Sicily, and the Tunisian campaign, Joseph Crudo told a thrilling story of what the American boys are doing so that freedom might continue and the American way of life be perpetuated.

FLEETWINGS AND ROHM & HAAS TEAMS TO CLASH IN BENEFIT GAME FOR INFANTILE PARALYSIS FUND. Will Meet Sunday Afternoon on the R&H Court. In the preliminary game, the girls' teams of the two industrial plants will clash for the third time.

1/25 - - BRISTOL MAN WOUNDED IN ITALIAN AREA. Pvt. Nicholas Cordisco, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Cordisco, 1021 Chestnut Street, was slightly wounded in action on December 3 in an engagement in Italy. Cordisco, 24 years old, entered the service on July 15, 1942.

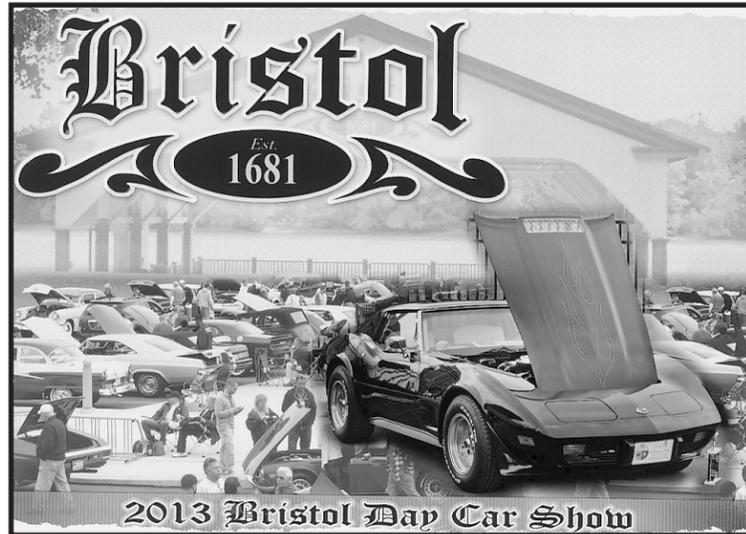
"Paper Helps to Make Parachute Flares. Waste Paper Shortage Is Acute! A Bundle a Week Saves a Boy's Life. U.S. Victory Waste Paper Campaign"

1/29 - - REV. LEHMAN STRAUSS WILL GO TO NIGERIA. The Rev. Lehman Strauss, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Wood and Walnut Streets, will leave in May to carry out the work of an evangelist among the English-speaking natives in the cities of Nigeria, Africa. The Rev. Mr. Strauss was the first pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, having served as such for nearly five years.

"RE-OPENING TOMORROW. Services at BRISTOL NAZARENE TABERNACLE. Trades Hall on Wood Street. John Wesley Maybury, Pastor. Preaching Sunday at 3 and 7:45 P.M. Prayer Service Thursday at 7:45 P.M."

## 2nd Annual Historic Bristol Day Car Show

The 2nd Annual Historic Bristol Day Car Show was a great success. The show was held on the grounds of the Snyder-Girotti Elementary / Middle School. Everyone had a great time and are looking forward to next year's event. Several people attempted to pre-register for next year already. People were thrilled with the location because they had indoor restrooms and indoor seating for the food concession. The delicious food was provided by Michele Hager, middle school teacher and her team of student volunteers. Profits raised went to the Relay for Life. Participants liked the fact that the entire show was on the blacktop and no one was forced to locate their vehicle on the grass. Sincere appreciation to the Bristol Borough School District for allowing the community to utilize and enjoy its beautiful campus.



A total of 94 cars were displayed with several car owners providing multiple vehicles. Special thanks to Bruce Harris who provided a beautiful bright yellow example of the newly-designed and exciting 2014 Corvette Stingray. The 2014 Corvette was displayed in a special collection known as Show Promoter's Corner. Show Promoter's Corner is a special collection of vehicles owned by the event staff volunteers. These cars are not judged and not available for People's Choice voting.

Vinnie DeMarco, owner of the Radcliffe Cafe, generously donated the car show trophies. There were trophies for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place People's Choice Award and one for Best of Show. Attendees voted for their favorite cars and trophies were awarded accordingly. Best of Show went to Vince Grisolia for his 1955 Chevrolet Nomad. First place People's Choice Award went to Angelo Bascio for his 2005 Chevrolet SSR. Second place People's Choice Award went to Mike Dwornita for his 1970 Chevrolet

Nova. Third place People's Choice Award went to Mike D'Ambrosia for his 1951 Mercury coupe. People really enjoyed being able to participate in the show.

This year each participant was provided with a 5 x 7 commemorative photo of their car with the Bristol Wharf as a backdrop. (see photo) Also, a Bristol car dealer historical display was featured in the school lobby.

The following event staff volunteers made this show possible: Mark Gesualdi, co-chair; Chris Gesualdi, co-chair; Marc Dubus, photographer; Anthony Gesualdi, car registration; Lenny Monks, car registration; Rob Reider, photographer assistant; Tom Hilkowski, historical display moderator; Ed Kuzma, people's choice moderator; Jackie Gesualdi, people's choice ballot control and tabulation; Angela Gesualdi, people's choice ballot control and tabulation.

## Tripping with BCHF

As part of your New Year's resolutions, why not resolve to join BCHF on one or both of the following trips!?

**Historic Morristown, Morris County, NJ, Thursday, May 15** - Bus will depart Bristol at 9 a.m. for Morristown, the county seat of Morris County, NJ. Morristown has been called "the military capital of the American Revolution" because of its strategic role in the war for independence. Today this history is visible in a variety of locations throughout the town that collectively make up Morristown National Historical Park. Morristown was incorporated as a town by an Act of the New Jersey Legislature on April 6, 1865.

Our first stop will be at the 7.5 acre National Historic Landmark, **Speedwell**, the restored estate of Stephen Vail, proprietor of the Speedwell Iron Works from the early to mid-1800s, and where Stephen's son Alfred worked with Samuel F.B. Morse to perfect the telegraph.

It was here on January 11, 1838, where the electromagnetic telegraph was first publicly demonstrated - making Speedwell the "Birthplace of the Telegraph." The Factory Building includes a new hands-on exhibit about the history of the telegraph. A variety of interactive displays takes visitors through the fascinating story of the development of the telegraph and why it all happened at Speedwell.

Lunch will follow at George and Martha's American Grille, and will include a salad, entree (choice of chicken marsala, hanger steak or salmon) with vegetables, dessert, and tea or coffee.

Following lunch, we'll be given a guided tour of Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, an 1810 house with period rooms, exhibit galleries and historic gardens. The Museum features the nation's largest collection of original artwork by 19th century political cartoonist Thomas Nast. Nast is known for popularizing the Democratic

## BCHF'S Annual Meeting - Nov. 20

Monmouth College Professor Richard Veit (left) speaks about Point Breeze, the former estate of Joseph Bonaparte in Bordentown, NJ, and the archeological work being done at that site.



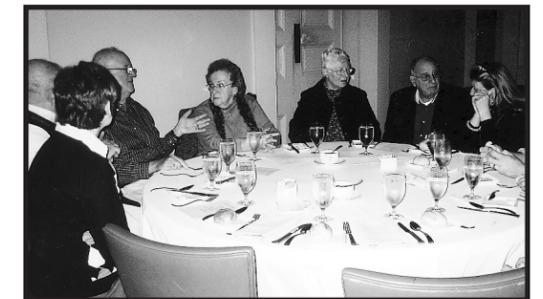
## Fairmount Park Holiday House Tour - Dec. 6



far left: BCHF members and friends head for the bus after touring Mount Pleasant, a Georgian mansion built about 1761-62, and a National Historic Monument. Left: Some of our group exit Historic Strawberry Mansion, built in 1789 as a summer home along the Schuylkill River.



Right: A sit-down luncheon was served in the Water Workd Restaurant (shown in photo at left) overlooking the Schuylkill River



## Tripping . . . continued from page 3

Donkey, the Republican Elephant, Uncle Sam and America's image of Santa Claus.

The all-inclusive price of this trip is \$90 for BCHF members and \$93 for non-members. For a trip flyer/reservation form, contact Kathy Barniskis at 215 943-0258. Please note that bus seat assignments will be made on a first-paid basis.

**Cape Cod, MA, incl. Nantucket Island & Martha's Vineyard, Sunday - Thursday, Sept. 14-18.** Bus will depart Bristol at 7 a.m. The itinerary includes: a meet & greet welcome, 4 nights lodging, 4 breakfasts and 4 dinners (incl. an evening of entertainment), fully escorted tours of the Hyannis area and Historic Sandwich, a visit

to the Heritage Museum & Gardens, ferry ride to Nantucket and guided tour of the island, ferry ride to Martha's Vineyard with a guided tour, baggage handling, all taxes and meal gratuities and driver and tour guide gratuities for items listed above.

Price is \$655 per person based on double occupancy, \$635 pp triple and \$825 single. National Tour Assn. trip insurance is available upon request. Reservations are being accepted by Helen Younglove, 215 788-9408, accompanied by a \$200 per person deposit, with the balance due by July 24. As with all BCHF bus trips, seat assignments will be made on a first-booked basis.

## Changing From Gas to Electricity

The "Bucks County Gazette", printed in Bristol, in their February 21, 1889 issue announced that the streets of Bristol had been illuminated by the electric light. Precisely at 6 o'clock p.m. "the light flashed and dispelled the gloom". It was agreed by everyone that the electric

lights were superior to the gas lights.

The building from where the electricity was generated was at Washington and Canal Streets. Some of the town's people visited the generation location and observed the machinery in operation.