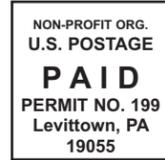




**Bristol Cultural &
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The Gazette



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Sponsoring Historic Bristol Day - Third Saturday of Each October
BCHF is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, all volunteer organization.

APRIL 2016

Spring Is Here

Now that it is the "SPRING" season, BCHF is getting into high gear for warmer weather activities. Included in these are bus trips, ethnic days at the Bristol waterfront, the Peach Social, and the all-important Historic Bristol Day on Saturday, October 15th. Please check the BCHF Calendar of Events for 2016 on the last page of THE GAZETTE. There are many activities that may be inviting to our readers and friends.

While you are out and about in Bristol Borough, check out the new construction at the corner of Mill and Radcliffe Streets. Travel north on Radcliffe Street adjacent to the Lenox China Corporate headquarters and look at the new housing development on the site of the former Merchant Shipyard. Another interesting change to Bristol's landscape is the removal of the Grundy POWERHOUSE and SMOKE STACK on which the name GRUNDY appeared. This is located at the corner of Canal and Washington Streets along the Delaware Canal.

President's Corner

Historic Bristol Day is BCHF's largest event of the year. Although we offer many other activities and events for our members, Bristol Day takes the most intense planning. We begin in January with committee meetings. The first item of business after naming a chairperson is to decide on a theme for the event. Of course, our theme reflects an historical component. Themes in the past have included The Civil War, Harriman and the ship building era of Bristol, the influence of the Delaware Canal, and influence of our Delaware River. This year we are highlighting the last fifty years of Bristol's history.

We have been fortunate to have very dedicated chairs and committee people willing to take on the responsibility of such a large undertaking. Liz Fisher was the chair of the last two year's events. This year Mary Gesualdi is our chair. Her husband Mark is again organizing the very successful car show that became part of Bristol Day three years ago. We thank Helen Younglove for obtaining the entertainment. We have a huge surprise in store for you this year. Stay tuned!

There are many other jobs as well. Signage has been handled by Robin Simmons-Butrey. I help a little with that task. We couldn't do without Gerry McCarry who

organizes set-up the day of the event and coordinates necessary functions with the borough. The cooperation of the borough is extremely appreciated as well. Ann Walp efficiently organizes the vendors. They all have done an excellent job.

To kick off Bristol Day this year, BCHF helped sponsor the Pop Culture of the 50's and 60's exhibit at the Centre for the Arts in February. We were able to announce our event to the crowd at the exhibit as well as have displays and a slide show about Bristol Day. It was a very enjoyable evening and a wonderful way to promote our event.

Of course, we are always looking for volunteers. If you have some time available around the third Saturday of October let us know. We have need for volunteers at other events as well. We would love to have you join us.

Also, I would like to develop a membership email list so we can inform you of upcoming events. Sometimes our events are compromised by weather, so it would be wonderful to be able to send out a notice if necessary. I hope in the future to include a place to indicate your email on the membership form. But in the meantime if you would be willing to be on our email list, you could send me your email at jaruano@comcast.net with your email information.

Enjoy the Gazette and hope to see you at Historic Bristol Day.

Jan Ruano

BCHF Calendar of Events for 2016

APRIL - Sun., 4/10, 2 p.m. Program entitled "The Artist in Your Pocket," by Donald Everhart, lead sculptor-engraver for the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. Light refreshment. Suggested donation of \$5 pp. BCHF headquarters. Call 215 788-9408 for info.

APRIL - SUN., 4/24, 3-5 p.m. "A Lovely Spring Tea" with traditional Tea fare. \$20 pp. BCHF headquarters. Limited number of reservations; call 215 788-9408 beginning 9 a.m., Sat., March 19. Call for current availability.

MAY - Wed.-Fri., 5/18-20. Bus trip to Pittsburgh. \$395 pp double, \$380 pp triple, \$505 single. SOLD OUT! Waiting list being taken at 215 788-9408.

JUNE - Sun., 6/26, noon-5 p.m. BCHF sales & info table at Annual Celtic Day in Lions Park, Bristol Borough. Event sponsored by Celtic Heritage Foundation, 215 788-5232.

AUGUST - Sun., 8/7, 2-4 p.m. Annual Peach Social. Angel food cake topped with fresh peaches & ice cream, plus beverage. Takeouts available with own container. Baked goods table. \$5/adult, \$3 under age 12. BCHF air-conditioned headquarters. **BENEFITS BCHF AWARDS TO BRISTOL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES.**

SEPTEMBER - Sat., 9/10 (rain date 9/11), noon - 5:00 p.m.

BCHF sales & info table at Annual Italian Festival in Lions Park, Bristol Borough. Event sponsored by Bristol Lions Club, www.bristolions.org.

SEPTEMBER - Thurs., 9/29 - Bus trip to Longwood Gardens followed by High Tea at Hotel DuPont. \$98 BCHF members age 62 & over; \$100 for members under 62. \$101 for non-members age 62 & over; \$103 for non-members under age 62. Reservations were being taken at 215 781-8591 beginning March 14.

OCTOBER - Sat., 10/15, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. 40th Historic Bristol Day. Fee for House Tour & Tea. For details, visit the BCHF's website, www.bristolhistory.org.

NOVEMBER - Wed., 11/2. Bus trip to Harlem. See details in this GAZETTE for details.

NOVEMBER - Wed., 11/16, 7:30 p.m. BCHF's annual business meeting, incl. election of Board members. Program & refreshments follow. Free. Public is invited. BCHF headquarters. Call 215 781-9895 for info.

- BCHF Headquarters are at 321 Cedar Street, Bristol
- For current information about activities and events, check out our web site at www.bristolhistory.org.

THE GAZETTE is a publication of the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Inc. - Harold Mitchener, Editor
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Articles for this issue of THE GAZETTE were contributed by: Helen Younglove, Erik Burro, Carol Mitchener, Jan Ruano, Kathy Barniskis, Alan Vogenberg and Harold Mitchener;

Photography by Carol Mitchener, Helen Younglove and from the Historical Collection of the Margaret R. Grundy Library.

Bristol Riverside Theater - 2016 Performances

"Rumors" - Mar 22 thru Apr. 10, "Man of La Mancha" - May 10 - May 29
Phone 215 785-0100 for further information.

Trip Talk

Ways & Means member Sue Watkins began taking reservations for the September 29 bus trip on Monday, March 14. The itinerary includes a self-guided tour of Longwood Gardens from approx. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., followed by High Tea at the Hotel duPont in Wilmington, DE, from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Cost per person is \$98 for BCHF members age 62 & over; \$100 for members under age 62. For non-members, the cost is \$101 for age 62 & over; \$103 for under age 62.

For a detailed flyer/reservation form and to check on reservation availability, call Sue at 215 781-8591.

Arrangements for the planned November 2 bus trip to Harlem have been finalized. The bus will depart Bristol at 8 a.m., with a tour of the famous Apollo Theater scheduled from 11 to noon. In 1983, both the interior and exterior of this building were designated as New York City Landmarks, and the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It is estimated that 1.3 million people visit the Apollo every year.

From 12:30 to 2:30, we'll be lunching at the highly-rec-

ommended Harlem Tavern. Our buffet menu will consist of Tavern Caesar salad, chicken Francaise, lemon herb panco-crust codfish, vegetable lasagna, pasta primavera, large fruit bowls and beverages (unlimited coffee, hot and cold tea). Following lunch we will have a comprehensive tour of Harlem, including the neighborhoods of Morning Side Heights, Hamilton Heights, Sugar Hill and El Barrio (time permitting). Other sites on the itinerary include: Strivers Row, the Sylvan Terrace, the Abyssinian Baptist Church, the African Market, and more. Depending on traffic, we should be back in Bristol at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Cost is \$115 for BCHF members and \$118 for non-members. Ellanna Delaney will begin accepting reservations on May 23 at 215 788-4138. Call for a detailed flyer/reservation form.

Keep in mind that we assign bus seats in the fairest way we know how; viz., in the order in which reservations are received.

Popular Program

On Sunday afternoon, March 13, actor, director and educator Neill Hartley returned to BCHF's stage to give another informative and entertaining presentation. This time, the subject of his one-man show was "The Magic of Lionel: Joshua Lionel Cowen." Mr. Hartley focused on the founding and history of one of the greatest toy companies ever.

Below: Attendees partake of the assortment of refreshments prepared by members of our W&M Committee



Left: Ways & Means Chairperson Kathy Barniskis introduces Neill Hartley to the audience.

Below: Mr. Hartley, in the role of Joshua Lionel Cowen, talks about the creation of Lionel trains and the amazing products and marketing that led to sales of fifty million trains per year.



Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **APRIL 1906** issues of THE BUCKS COUNTY GAZETTE.

4/5 - - GRAND OFFICERS VISIT BRISTOL DIVISION. On last Friday evening, Bristol Division No. 107, Sons of Temperance was honored by the annual official visit from the Grand Officers of the State of Pennsylvania. The Grand Worthy Patriarch congratulated the Bristol Division on the good work they had done during the year. This division is one of the best in the State.

WILL BUILD \$10,000 FIRE HOUSE. Architects are now working on the plans for a new fire house to be owned and occupied by America Hose, Hook and Ladder Company No. 2, of Bristol.

THE ELKS LODGE IS BOOMING. The Bristol Lodge of Elks is booming along at a rapid rate. On last Monday evening, eight candidates were initiated into the mysteries of the order - 3 from Bristol, 4 from Newtown and one from Morrisville.

RED MEN PLAN GALA. Mohican tribe of Red Men, of Bristol, are planning an anniversary celebration to be held on the afternoon of May 14, which will be the most elaborate affair of its kind ever held in Bristol. It will be a big day for the Indians.

GAVE A \$500 BOND. At the regular meeting of the Bristol School Board held last night, Joseph R. Grundy presented the public schools a five hundred dollar, 4 1/2 per cent bond, the interest on which shall be expended yearly for a gold medal to be presented to a member of the graduating class as a result of merit.

FOUGHT WITH LAWTON. CHASED GERONIMO. There are probably not a dozen people among the 8,000 population of Bristol who have knowledge of the interesting and thrilling career of Frank Musnuff, who is now a member of the local police force. Twenty-five years ago, Musnuff was a cavalry soldier down on the borders of old Mexico, in Arizona and New Mexico.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

John Wanamaker has placed a delivery wagon in Bristol in charge of Harry Lancaster.

Harry Phipps has purchased the stone house on Jefferson Avenue, opposite the site of the old Joshua Peirce residence, for \$2,025.

Forty-seven cars of bituminous coal arrived in Bristol on Monday for distribution among the Bristol mills. This is the largest consignment of coal ever received at one time.

The Travel Club of Bristol has become a member of the State Federation of Women's Clubs.

"Bucks County's Leading Confectionery. We have a large and varied assortment of Easter eggs, baskets, etc. We are the manufacturers. All eggs are composed of pure cream cocoanut. CUMMINGS' CONFECTIONERY, Bristol."

WANTED - A competent woman for general house work. Must be honest and temperate. Apply until Saturday at 217 Radcliffe Street.

4/12 - - STURGEON HATCHERY AT BRISTOL. Time was when sturgeon peopled the waters of the Delaware and sturgeon flesh and roe were profitable articles of commerce. The sturgeon has almost disappeared. State neglect was the cause. It is now projected to establish a station in Bristol, on the Delaware, for the propagation of sturgeon and, by that means, restock the Delaware with this edible and valuable fish.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

St. Mark's Church will hold their annual euchre in the school hall on Easter Monday night. The prizes are on exhibition in the store window next to the Hotel Closson.

The pupils of the high and grammar schools will hold a May Carnival in the high school building on May 1. A feature of the entertainment will be a Maypole dance.

Upon the invitation of William V. Leech, president of the school board, the members of the graduating class of the high school were given a personally conducted tour through the big worsted spinning mill of William H. Grundy & Company yesterday afternoon, of which Mr. Leech is superintendent. Mr. Leech will give a prize to the scholar writing the best essay upon what was seen in the mill.

"Specials for This Week. Steak halibut, lb., 20¢. Fresh salmon, lb., 20¢. Fresh smelts, lb., 15¢. Lettuce, large heads, 15¢. Spinach, per half-peck, 15¢. Orders taken for fresh fish at the Pond & Washington Streets store. HORN'S, No. 308 Mill Street."

"Come In and See Our Grand Opening of Spring Styles! Clothing, Shoes, Hats and Gents' Furnishings. THE FAMOUS RELIABLE STORE, Joseph B. Singer, Proprietor. 319 Mill Street."

"COLONIAL THEATRE. First Grand Concert of the BRISTOL CHORAL UNION, Thursday Eve., April 19. Tickets 35 and 50 cents. The Bristol Choral Union - 100 voices."

"MRS. J.T. DE WITT, leading florist, Bristol, PA. Old Post Office reopened - not for letters but for something to gladden the heart as well - that is, a choice assortment of flowers for Easter. Mill Street or 450 Pond Street."

"Spring Millinery Opening! You are cordially invited to attend our opening Friday evening and all day Saturday. All the newest creations in hand-made and pressed hats, lingerie and leghorns at lowest prices. MISS C. DONNELLY, 517 Bath Street."

4/19 - - SERVICES AT ITALIAN CHAPEL. Sunday was a memorable occasion in the Bristol Italian colony when the edifice on Dorrance Street, recently purchased by the Catholic Church from John P. Stout, was dedicated to religious worship by Rev. Paul Gentile, who blessed the chapel. Father Gentile has been in Bristol for a number of weeks and has been working among the Italians, and has been designated as the priest to have charge of the mission on Dorrance Street. Italians are becoming a big proportion of Bristol's inhabitants.

"150 Suite for Men and Boys at Manufacturer's Prices! Also 50 Overcoats. The Best \$10 Black Suit in the United States. This is our leader. JOHNSON BROTHERS, Mill and Wood Streets."

"REAL ESTATE AND INSURANCE AGENCY, 210 Radcliffe Street . . . For Sale: Dwelling, Pond St. near Mill - \$2,000. Dwelling, Radcliffe St. abv Jefferson Ave. - \$1,200. Dwelling, Dorrance St. near Pond - \$1,800. Dwelling, Jefferson Ave. above Wood - \$4,000."

"Don't Lose Time! The GAS RANGE season is here and everyone who wishes to spend a comfortable summer in a cool house is getting a gas range. Prices \$9.50 to \$13.00. \$2.00 down; \$2.00 a month. Connections fee. BRISTOL GAS LIGHT CO., 245 Mill Street."

4/26 - - BRISTOL AT WORK. Bristol is doing its share toward raising funds for the victims of the San Francisco earthquake. Over 700 have been subscribed. Work of collection has just started.

SONS OF VETERANS CELEBRATE. Col. J.M. Godlin Camp, No. 29, Sons of Veterans, of Bristol, celebrated the fifth anniversary of the organization of that camp on Tuesday evening. The lodge is in a flourishing condition and all eligible sons of veterans are invited to join the order.

WILL BUILD NEW BOWLING ALLEYS. William E. Doron has agreed to erect for Philadelphia parties a large bowling alley on his property at the foot of Market Street, extending toward Mill Street. The building will contain six alleys which will be the regulation 85 feet in length.

THE WATER QUESTION. Bristol Councilmen Arrange for People to Vote on New Water Works Proposition. The meeting was one of the utmost importance to the people of Bristol as it paved the way to take a vote to qualified electors upon the proposition as to whether the borough shall be bonded for the sum of \$100,000 for the purpose of building a system of water works and filtering plant.

A GRAND DAY FOR BRISTOL METHODISM. Next Sunday, April 29, will be a "red letter day" in the history of the Bristol Methodist Episcopal Church. All the bonds and the mortgage held against the beautiful and expensive church and parsonage property will be burned, and the whole property will be absolutely free of debt.

BLOOMSDALE LOST A CLOSE GAME. Bloomsdale opened its home season on Saturday before a great crowd and was defeated by the Bachelor F.C. by the score of 2 to 1. Playing for Bloomsdale were: Britton, Richards, Barton, Bunting, Rue, Landreth, Mulligan, Hamilton and Praul.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

The new chemical engine for Good Will Hose Company has arrived. It will be honored with appropriate ceremony next month on the day of the Red Men's celebration.

Deputy Game Warden Michener and Frank Lauderbough have released fifty pair of Southern quail in this neighborhood.

The regular dances that had been given during the winter on Saturday evenings, which were postponed during Lent, will resume again on Saturday of this week.

The Corono Kid Works has specifications for the erection of extensive additions to their big plant, which will cost approximately \$60,000. When completed, employment will be given to 1,000 hands. 600 are now employed.

Specifications have been issued for building a large addition to St. Mark's Parochial School on Radcliffe St. The building will be extended to the rear by 30 ft.

WANTED - Nice boy 14 years of age would like board with nice private family, at not more than 3.00 per week. Address "X" this office.

A Burlington Hero by Erik L. Burro

In this issue we are pleased to have an article called "A BURLINGTON HERO," by Erik L. Burro. Erik lives in Burlington and requested history information from our Grundy Library's History collection. He was particularly interested in information about the Ferry Boat "William Doran" that was owned and operated by William Doran from Bristol. Bristol was also founded by Samuel Clift from Burlington.

Carol and Harold Mitchener met with Mr. Burro at the Grundy Library and enjoyed talking about the two towns.

Meander through the churchyards of Burlington and you pass many heroes whose deeds have been forgotten - - soft spoken Quakers, proud soldiers and patriots, policemen and volunteer firemen, ordinary citizens from many walks of life; they were adults. This story is of a boy from Burlington who showed courage and quick action to save the lives of others.

Bill Bastian was born in Burlington in 1897. He was named after his father, William S. Bastian, a local shoe manufacturer, who died when Billy was four. Billy and his older sister, Ruth, kept their last names when their mother remarried.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Burlington was a great place to grow up. It had a thriving commercial district where people from surrounding communities would come and shop for clothes and the essentials of everyday life. It had its own dairies, bottlers, and suppliers of coal, ice and lumber. A large variety of produce was available from nearby farms and fishermen and its harbor offered bountiful supplies of fish and oysters at reasonable prices.

For youngsters in this little city there was lots to do. There were ball fields, parks and open spaces where horses from the local firehouses could be seen. The automobile was gaining popularity and the main streets of Broad and High were already wide enough to accommodate the mix of cars and wagons that busily made their deliveries, picking up and dropping off people and packages at the train station and lining up for the ferry crossing at the end of High Street. Burlington was only 30 minutes by train from the ferry to Philadelphia. Rail service to New York City was nearly as fast as driving there today. Factories in town and along the river provided a variety of jobs for bringing up families here. Schools, a library and a theater made it even better. Like Billy, many boys in town were attracted to the Boy Scouts which had recently been introduced in America.

Burlington City wholeheartedly embraced the Boy Scout movement by initiating two troops, one at the old First Baptist Church, the other at the Methodist Church. Often, they undertook projects together. The town's newspaper, *The Burlington Enterprise*, reported regularly on all Burlington scouting activities. This ongoing coverage helped increase its local popularity. Billy and his friends were enthusiastic members. From its earliest days the scout motto had been, **Be Prepared**.

On a Friday, the day after July 4th, 1912, Billy and a group of friends were along the bank of the Delaware, next to the wharf where the ferry comes in. It was a hot day and

some of the boys decided to take a dip in the river before the next scheduled arrival. This may not have seemed unusual, since people often came and went to Burlington Island in their own canoes and rowboats from the same shoreline. On weekends and excursion days, the ferry would stop at Burlington Island before arriving from Bristol. On that day, the boys swimming and diving in the harbor did not hear the ferryboat captain's warning blasts as it proceeded from the island.

It is easy to overlook, more than a century later, how much has changed along the waterfront. At that time there were constant sounds of ship traffic passing by. Regularly scheduled steamers from Philadelphia dropped off passengers at both Burlington and its island resort, on their way to Bordentown and Trenton. These steamships, like the frequent tugboats moving freight and coal barges, were

always tooting to warn pleasure boaters, fishermen and other workboats of their arrival as they followed the channel around Burlington Island. Ship blasts were such a familiar background noise to living along the waterfront that Billy Bastian's buddies completely ignored the succession of warnings from the ferryboat that was headed their way. The captain, expecting them to immediately scurry away continued to rapidly close in for his scheduled arrival. Bastian, seeing that his friends were completely unaware of the oncoming ferry, ran into the water, shouting, and helping each to get safely ashore. However, Billy didn't quite make it and was struck by the ferryboat as it slammed up against the pilings. No police were nearby. Local radio communications and public telephones did not exist. The boys promptly picked up their injured companion and carried him off to a nearby doctor who was not home. Then carried him off to another where Billy was able to get emergency attention and be driven to the hospital.

The Burlington Enterprise, as well as the *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, reported Billy Bastian had suffered life threatening injuries. His medical report no longer exists. Burlington City's Superintendent of the Board of Education, claiming present-day disclosure regulations, has not been willing to verify from old records if and when Billy ever returned to school. It is known that members of his Burlington Boy Scout troop took him along on their trip to Washington, DC later that year. It began as a steamer trip to Philadelphia, then another liner to Baltimore via the Chesapeake Canal, ending with a trolley ride to the nation's capital. It is not known whether he was carried, walked with crutches or was wheelchair bound. He died the next year of complications and pneumonia.

Continued on page 4

A Beginning, an End and a Rebirth

Congregation Ahaavath Achim in Bristol, Pennsylvania was founded in 1904 by 10 pious Jews who had emigrated to Bristol after the unrest and persecution of Jews in Europe during the late 19th Century.

In 1917, after many years of adapting to their new country and achieving some financial stability, the members of the Congregation purchased a building for use as a Synagogue, at 119 Pond Street. They hired a Rabbi who was also a ritual butcher, and started the first Hebrew School and Sunday School in Bucks County. In the summer of 1935, the Congregation completed a renovation of the building. Following World War II, Jewish servicemen who had established their careers in Bristol before the War returned home to continue their efforts to build a new life for their families.

During 1947, several Jewish families who had purchased land for a new house of worship decided to deed the property to Congregation Ahavath Achim, with the provision that a Synagogue be built within 2 years and continue that use for at least 25 years. The new Synagogue was much larger than the previous building, designed to allow for secular as well as religious activities. The new name became Bristol Jewish Center (BJC) of Congregation Ahavath Achim, completed in 1949.

BJC was an active, warm, inviting Congregation as was the building itself. Until the 1990s, Bristol Jewish Center thrived, but then members aged and moved away; so attendance dropped. After 2001, both membership and attendance increased, although never reaching the heights of the earlier years. Finally, after a "perfect storm" of coincidences including a drastic decrease in attendance in 2015, the Congregation voted to close the building and join with another Synagogue in Bucks County.

After a few months of negotiations, the Bristol Jewish Center joined with Congregation Kol Emet (KE) in Yardley at its modern glass and steel building with light wood, located on Old Oxford Valley Road.

The KE Board indicated that our artifacts (memorial plaques and other items) would not fit into their decor. One Torah with Torah covers, renomim and yad were donated along with some books selected by their Librarian, a painting of the Bristol Jewish Center and the beautiful art piece in memory of BJC Rabbi Dr. Samuel Katz (which hung over the staircase on Pond St.), along with the 7 foot Outdoor Chanukah Menorah donated to BJC by Righteous Gentile David Follin. In addition, it was learned that the Jewish Archives at Temple

University Library was very interested in preserving the history of the Congregations and Synagogues of the Jew in Philadelphia. Through the efforts of Margery Sly of the Jewish Archiver, BJC was able to donate all of the documents and photos relating to the Bristol Jewish Center to the Temple Library. There were some very interesting items of invaluable importance such as Congregation minute books from 1917 until about 1922, written in beautiful cursive Yiddish. Also there were photos of Jewish school classes and Sisterhood functions dating to the late 1940s, and much more. BJC member Audrey Vogenberg did her best to identify the Congregant students in the photos.

All of the material donated to Temple was in addition to items donated to the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library starting with the duties as Treasurer of BJC in the early years of the 21st Century.

Rabbi Ira Budow, Principal at Abrams Hebrew Academy was happy about the balance of the Sanctuary fixtures and artifacts. He enthusiastically embraced the idea of saving the Bristol Jewish Center Sanctuary, proposing a reconstructed, small version. Due to the joint vision of the BJC and the Abrams Hebrew Academy, the wonderful workmanship of Richard Volponi and his staff, there is a room where the BJC Sanctuary has been reconstructed at about 25% scale. The Arc, eternal lights, seats, memorial plaques, bookcases (with books), 2 Torahs (with covers), remonim, plaques honoring the ancestors of BJC who worked so hard to build and maintain the Synagogue and much more were shown there. The name is "ABRAMS BRISTOL JEWISH CENTER" on the wall outside of the room, using the original letters from the outside of 216 Pond Street.

The aim of Rabbi Budow is to have "our" Synagogue used by the Abrams Academy students as a Sanctuary for all kinds of religious functions. Recently, Alan Vogenberg, treasurer of BJC, was honored with an Aliyah as a representative of BJC at a complete Rosh Chodesh Torah service. Mr. Vogenberg mentioned that the students of the Abrams Hebrew Academy liked the seats.

Bristol Jewish Center now lives on for the Jewish youth of tomorrow!

Mr. Vogenberg writes that the BJC building has been sold, to be used as an office complex by the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority.

BCHF is grateful to Mr. Vogenberg for documenting the move of BJC to their new Yardley location.

PROGRAM ON COINAGE

We're hoping to see many of BCHF members and friends on Sunday afternoon, April 10, when a program entitled "The Artist in Your Pocket" will be presented by Donald Everhart, lead sculptor-engraver for the United States Mint in Philadelphia. Mr. Everhart's presentation will begin at 2:00 p.m., in our headquarters at 321 Cedar Street. Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the program.

A donation of \$5 per attendee is suggested.

Bristol's Knights of Pythias Lodge, Hermione #109

In Bristol, the Knights of Pythias, Hermione #109, was organized in 1868 with nine charter members. The parent organization of the Knights had been formed in 1864 in Washington, D.C. by Justus H. Rathbone; the original purpose had been a secret fraternal society for government clerks. It was named Knights of Pythias because the founder (J.H.Rathbone) was impressed by the story of Damon and Pythias from the fourth century BC in Syracuse. When Justus organized the Knights of Pythias, he initially wanted to limit the membership to government clerks, but the membership soon broadened. By 1868, there were 3000 members. (The founder died in 1889.) The membership historically had been open to males,

at least 18 years of age, in good health who believed in a Supreme Being. (Maimed individuals were not admitted until 1875.) Members were accepted by blackball ballot.

The legend illustrates the ideals of loyalty, honor and friendship. Pythias had been condemned to death for opposing the tyrant Dionysius. Damon, his friend and fellow member of the Pythagoreans, offered himself as a hostage so that Pythias could make farewells to his family. The time for the execution of Pythias came near and Damon had not returned. At the last minute Pythias reappeared and embraced his friend. Dionysius was so impressed that he released both men and begged to be admitted to their friendship.

The rituals and ceremonies were unusual in that day because they were officially published in full. They followed a pattern with three degrees - - Page, Esquire



and Knight. In 1887, the Knights started an Endowment Rank to provide insurance coverage (which helped its growth). (In 1931, the American United Insurance Co. took over this role, leaving the Knights of Pythias where it started - - as a fraternal organization.) By 1900, the Knights of Pythias had more than a half million members. At its peak in 1923, the Knights claimed almost a million members. It lost many members during the Depression and never really recovered despite the initiation of Pres. F.D. Roosevelt in 1936. By the 1960's, membership was down to about 200,000; in 1994 there were only 80,000 members. In 2003, total membership around the world was listed as over 2,000 lodges. (Local units used to be called "Castles" but over time they came to be called "Lodges.") As for its current philanthropy, the order provides aid to victims of national disasters. It runs camps for underprivileged youth and homes for aged members. It has sponsored scholarship funds, safety programs and several research foundations.

The Bristol group of the Knights purchased the former Methodist Church on Wood Street in 1894. According to an article in the *Gazette* of July 1895, the officers of the Knights were proud of their invested funds. The worth of the lodge was over \$14,000; this included "investments for relief." The total membership of the Bristol group was 240 men. In addition, to help defray costs, the lodge room was available for rent for "entertainment, fairs and suppers with full equipment of dishes, tables and kitchen utensils. Those wishing to use the room were asked to apply to the trustees W.H.P. Hall, Gustav Rathke, or Charles Wollard."

Burlington Hero . . . Continued from Page 3

When you visit St. Mary's Episcopal Church on Broad St., in the center of the churchyard you will find a large cross of brown polished stone. It is the headstone of his father, William S. Bastian, on one side, and Billy's name, William B. Bastian on the other. Etched between the dates of his birth and death is the recognizable seal of the Boy Scouts of America.

Billy's heroic deed became national known when his story appeared in *Boys Life* shortly after it had occurred. The Scouts were proud of him then. We should be proud of him now.

Postscript: The two original Burlington Boy Scout troops no longer exist. There are, however, two troops that provide for Boy Scout programs for youngsters living in Burlington. One is in Burlington Township, the other in Edgewater Park.

Erik L. Burro

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856 313-7860 Eburro@comcast.net

Pythian Hall Sold

In June of 1918, Pythian Hall on Wood Street, was sold for \$7,000 to local Union No. 1462 Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. It is in the three-hundred block of the street just above the two public schools that were there.

The red brick high school building, erected in 1894, remains and is used for a Senior Citizen's Center as of 2016. The original school in Bristol was built following the Pennsylvania Legislature's law in 1834 requiring public schools in the state. This building has been torn down.

The location of Pythian Hall on Wood Street had been the original site of the Methodist Church, following the preaching of Captain Thomas Webb of the British Army. He spoke to people in Bristol under a large tree that stood there. Captain Webb is interred in the Methodist Church in Bristol, England.

Webb's sermon inspired a group of people in Bristol, PA to build a church for Methodists to use for worship. The first building was a small one-story structure built in 1803. As the congregation grew, that building was enlarged in 1827. The congregation built a two-story building in 1845 which is presently standing and is now

used for two apartments, one on each floor.

It was the Methodists who sold the building in 1894 to the Knights of Pythias for \$5,000. The Methodists erected a stone structure at the corner of Mulberry and Cedar Streets.

An interesting story about the building of the Methodist's first church, involved Mary Connor, a midwife and member of the Methodist group who lived on Mill Street. She worked diligently to raise the funds to buy the materials for the first church and when it came time to pay for the materials, the treasurer of the group had absconded with the funds. Mary started over and again raised the funds needed and the church was built.

Mary Connor is called by the Methodists "mother of Bristol Methodism". When Mary died, she was buried in the Methodist Cemetery behind the church. That Cemetery was closed and the remains were moved to the Bristol Cemetery in Bristol Township located at the intersection of PA Route 413 and U.S. Route 13.

In the 1950's the Methodists sold the ground of their former cemetery to the A & P Company where a supermarket was built. That building presently continues as a supermarket but is called "Selecto."

A Note From Ways & Means



Welcome spring! What better way to do this than joining us for our Annual Tea on Sunday, April 24th from 3-5? Call Helen Younglove to reserve your seat(s) at 215 788-9408. Delicious traditional tea fare including homemade scones, a floral arranging presentation, that will be raffled, and a good get-together with the gals is on the agenda. (Suggested donation is \$20.00)

You'll be looking at your change differently after our next program on Sunday, April 10th at 2 pm. Donald Everhart, lead sculptor and engraver for the US Mint in Philadelphia will be presenting, "The Artist in Your Pocket". Light refreshments, provided by the Ways & Means committee, will follow the presentation. (Suggested donation is \$5.00)

Our "Pittsburgh Express" trip is sold out, with 3 on the waiting list.

Sue Watkins is accepting reservations for our Sept.

29th trip to Longwood Gardens with High Tea at the Hotel Dupont. Call Sue for more information and to reserve at 215 781-8591. Our reservation deadline is August 26th. Please see the back of the Gazette for additional details.

The First Friday schedule will be: May 6, June 3, July 1, Aug. 5, Sept. 2. Look for BCHF along Mill Street. A popular item that we sell are postcards of various Bristol sites. We are adding a Grundy Library postcard in commemoration of their 50th Anniversary.

Our Bristol throws (cranberry, blue, & green) are now well-stocked in Mignoni's and Great ID's.

As always, if you have a suggestion for a program, a trip, or want volunteer information, please call me at 215 943-0258. The next W&M meeting will be on April 18th at 7 pm at the BCHF headquarters on Cedar Street. All are welcome!

Kathy Barniskis - Ways & Means Chair

SILBERT HOUSE

The Silbert House, in the one-hundred block of Radcliffe St., had their stables removed in 1919. They were located on Market Street. Today the site of the former stables is across Market St. from two stores, one a floor covering shop and the other a newspaper and cigarette store.

The original Silbert House opened as a Temperance Hotel. The next tenant obtained a license to sell liquor, and the name was changed to the Cottage Hotel. Following the Civil War, it was purchased by George Silbert, Sr. and he changed the name to Silbert House. In 2016, the business is called Annabella's and they serve Italian food.

Over the many years, other businesses in the building included a printer's shop, a yard goods store and the temporary headquarters of the TRUST COMPANY BANK. The bank was there while their new building was being erected on the corner of Radcliffe and Market Sts. on the river side.

In the *Bristol Courier* newspaper article of June 21, 1919, once the stable area was removed, there was to be 10 individual steel garages erected. The largest stable building was to be repaired and was to be used as a repair shop and wash room for cars.