



The Gazette



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

JANUARY 2025

President's Corner

A New Year

We wish you all a happy, healthy New Year!

As the new year begins, BCHF is in the process of planning the year's events, presentations, and trips. We are also looking forward to the election and installation of new officers at our first monthly board meeting of the year.

According to the BCHF bylaws, all officers must be board members in good standing and presidents and vice presidents may only serve 3 years, consecutively.

Therefore, Sue Watkins as Vice President and I will be stepping down. In addition, we will be electing a new corresponding secretary because Nancy Doyle has retired from the board. We are extremely fortunate to retain Anna Larrisey as Treasurer.

It was a pleasure serving as the president and I look forward to the future of BCHF.



Titanic historian David Kaplan during his presentation
“Unsuspecting Participants” on Tues. Nov. 26th 2024

First Ladies Facts and Trivia

By Harold Mitchener

January is the month of the inauguration of the U. S. President. It was originally in March, but was too long from the November election. Hence it was changed.

Some people in Bristol remember Priscilla Cooper Tyler. She married Robert Tyler, oldest son of President John Tyler. He was our 10th President. His wife Latetia was ill and died in the White House. He asked his daughter-in-law to come live in the White House and act as a First Lady. He later married Julia Gardner from New York. Priscilla and Robert returned to Bristol where they rented what is now the Grundy House. Robert worked in the court system in Philadelphia and commuted from Bristol to Philadelphia by steamboat.

First Lady to deliver a President Weekly radio address - **Laura Bush**

Wrote *Millie's Book* – the life of a White House dog – **Barbara Bush**

Wrote a best-selling book: *It Takes a Village* – **Hillary Clinton**

Had an anti-drug slogan “Just Say No”, appeared in 11 films, had a role on Broadway, published a memoir, *My Turn* – **Nancy Reagan**

Managed the accounts of the family's peanut business – **Roslyn Carter**

Openly discussed her dependency on prescription pain killers and alcohol, co-founded a drug treatment center – **Betty Ford**.

Became the 1ST First Lady to receive a Congressional Gold Medal for her devotion to causes for the environment and beautification projects – **Lady Bird Johnson**

Held a job as inquiring camera girl at the Washington Times-Herald, did a televised tour of the newly-decorated White House (awarded an honorary Emmy for the program) – **Jackie Kennedy**

An Army wife – lived on posts in the Philippines, France, and the Canal Zone, liked the color pink- **Mamie Eisenhower**

Called, “the Boss” by her husband, joined his office as a paid staff member- **Bess Truman**

Was the longest serving First Lady, appointed special delegate to the U. N. – **Eleanor Roosevelt**

Was graduate from Stanford University with a degree in geology, served as president of the Girl Scouts before and after, 1st First Lady to speak on the radio – **Lou Hoover**

First woman to vote for her husband in a presidential election, supported women's causes- **Frances Harding**

Assisted her husband with correspondence and learned to decode military and diplomatic messages- **Edith Wilson** (2nd wife)

Planted the White House Rose Garden, redecorated mansion's private quarters with handcrafts made by Appalachian women, lived in Bryn Mawr and Princeton before going to Washington – **Ellen Wilson** (1st wife)

Arranged for the planting of a thousand Japanese Cherry trees around the Tidal Basin, 1st First Lady to ride beside her husband after the swearing in ceremony at the Capitol – **Helen Taft**

Managed children with posed photos release to the press to present positive images – **Edith Roosevelt** (2nd wife)

Crocheted slippers for charity, subject to epileptic seizures, mostly kept out of the public eye – **Ida McKinley**

Used influence to work for charities (admitting women to Johns Hopkins Medical School), became president of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution), established the White House China Collection, a skilled china painter, was in poor health most of the time – **Carolyn Harrison**

Created a role for herself as a political wife and advisor. Said if her husband were elected President, she would “neither keep house nor make butter”. First to use a Presidential shield and national motto in design E Pluribus Unum- one out of many – **Sarah Polk**

Born in London, an accomplished harpist, often performing during Washington gatherings – **Louisa Adams**

Married at age 18, visited Madame de Lafayette in prison in Paris and probably saved her life. Their daughter was the first to be married in the White House, ordered the first set of White House China (1817) – **Elizabeth Monroe**

Known for her warmth, established the political importance of the White House. Oversaw the evacuation of the White House during the War of 1812, saved important documents and full-length painting of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart- **Dolley Madison**.

Married the President at age 21 (first wedding of a President held in the Executive Mansion in 1886), hosted two receptions a week – one on Saturdays to accommodate working women, was a First Lady twice. – **Francis Cleveland**

Became the 1st First Lady to appear at her husband’s funeral. Prepared her husband’s political history by creating a memorial library in their home. (This served as a precursor to today’s Presidential Library – **Lucretia Garfield**

1st First Lady to hold a college degree, did not support women’s suffrage, did not protest when she was adopted as a symbol of the temperance movement, or the struggle for higher education, started the White House Easter Egg Roll – **Lucy Hayes**.

Lived off income from a memoir book of her husband’s death, went on a 2-year trip around the world after his term ended. – **Julia Grant**

A southerner considered a traitor by the Confederates and mistrusted as a spy by northerners- **Mary Lincoln**

Social hostess for her uncle (James Buchanan who never married. They were from Lancaster, PA). Knew the Washington society, eventually married at age 35, gave her collection of fine art to the Smithsonian and endowed a home for sick children at Johns Hopkins- **Harriet Lane**

Stricken by grief from the death of sons, did not attend the swearing-in ceremony and had no inaugural ball. It was 2 years before she attended social events- **Julia Pearce**

1st First Lady to hold a paying job before her marriage. A teacher for most of her 20s, tutored her future husband who wanted to study law. Despite ill health, established the White House Library. – **Abigail Fillmore**

Wrote letters to her husband during long separations. She described her work as managing the farm and raising children. 1st First lady to live in the Presidential mansion in Washington. – **Abigail Adams**

Urged by her husband to hold drawing room receptions every Friday to host distinguished guests. A Presidential home in NYC and Philadelphia. Well aware of her role and political importance. Dutifully followed her husband to military headquarters and army camps. Burned her letters after her husband’s death to ensure that their private life would remain private- **Martha Washington**.

Sources

The Smithsonian First Ladies Collection by Lisa Graddy and Amy Pastan.
Smithsonian Books: Washington, D.C.

Images of America: Bristol
by Harold and Carol Mitchener

ON THE MOVE IN 2025

The Ways & Means Committee has booked space on two cruises and planned four day trips for the New Year, as follows:

CRUISES

May 10-17, 8 day/7 night "Pacific Wine Country" cruise aboard the Sapphire Princess, stopping at Los Angeles and San Diego, CA; Astoria, OR; Victoria and Vancouver, Canada. A Passport is required. Rates, per person, double occupancy, range from \$3,048 to \$3,578 and include round-trip airfare from Phila., port charges, government fees, taxes and transfers to and from the ship. "Princess Plus" options include FREE Plus Beverage Package (drinks up to \$15 ea.), FREE Prepaid Gratuities, FREE Unlimited Wi-Fi, etc. For a detailed flyer, call 215-788-9408 or print from our website, <http://www.bristolhistory.org>. For reservations, call Grand American Travel in Morton, PA, at 1-800-423-0247. Final payment is due by January 9.

July 1-8, 8 day/7 night "Independence Day Celebration" Cruise aboard Cunard Line's Queen Mary 2 ocean liner, stopping at Newport, RI; Boston, MA; and Halifax, Nova Scotia. A Passport is required. Rates, per person, double occupancy, range from \$1,920 to \$2,680 and include port charges and government fees. For a detailed flyer, call 215-788-9408 or print from our website, <http://www.bristolhistory.org>. For reservations, call Grand American Travel at 1-800-423-0247. Final payment is due by February 17.

BUS TRIPS

Thursday, April 10 -- The Swaminarayan Akshardham in Robbinsville, NJ, followed by a three-course luncheon at The Cranberry Inn and a visit to David Bradley Chocolatier (**Note: Easter is 4/20!**). This immense BPAS Swaminarayan is the largest Hindu temple outside of India. It was built between 2015 and 2023, rises 19 stories above the ground and sprawls over 180 acres on a campus big enough to hold six Yankee Stadiums.

The Cranberry Inn has been functioning as a place to eat and drink since the 1750s. It was an alleged stop on the underground railroad. Many famous people have visited The Cranberry Inn, including Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek and her entire entourage in April 1935 and the Prince and Princess of the Netherlands. It

can only be speculated that several of our Founding Fathers stayed here when they used the main thoroughfare connecting all of the colonies. It's known that Albert Einstein came to The Inn frequently to drink beer with and speak German with his friend and inn owner Adrian Van Ravesteyn. A colonial, historical event occurring in Cranberry Towne was the encampment of General Washington's troops along the Cranberry Creek in June of 1778, under the leadership of Alexander Hamilton and Le Marquis de Lafayette.

David Bradley Chocolatier has been producing gourmet hand-crafted chocolates for over 45 years. Their chocolates can be found in many retail and supermarket chains across the East Coast and they also private label for Fortune 500 smaller businesses across the country. Wait until you see their mouth-watering Easter display!

The all-inclusive trip cost is \$120 per person for BCHF members; \$130 for non-members. Call Jan Ruano at 215-788-2106 for flyer/reservation form or print it from our website, <http://www.bristolhistory.org>. Reservation deadline is March 15.

Thursday, June 26 -- 3-Course Luncheon on the Moshulu, the world's oldest and largest square-rigged sailing vessel still afloat and the one-and-only restaurant venue on a tall ship in the world today, followed by a tour of the magnificent Masonic Temple on Broad St., a National Historic Landmark constructed in 1873 and considered one of the great "wonders" of the Masonic world.

The all-inclusive cost is \$130 per person for BCHF members; \$140 for non-members. Call Helen Younglove at 215-788-9408 for flyer/reservation form or print it from our website, <http://www.bristolhistory.org>. Reservation deadline is May 21.

Stay tuned for details on trips to Eckley Miners' Village in Foster Twp., PA, in September or early October and Lyndhurst Mansion in Tarrytown, NY, in early December.

We're depending on BCHF members to spread the word about our trips to their relatives, friends, neighbors and coworkers. The bus trips require a minimum of 45 passengers, and we'd hate to disappoint anyone by having to cancel.

Seeing the Historic Landscape: An Update from the Bristol Friends Meeting House Project

By Meagan Ratini and Jesse Walker

Archaeologists converged this fall at the Friends Meeting House on Market Street in Bristol Borough. This event was a continuation of an on-going public archaeological project started in 2016 as a collaboration between BCHF and the Historic Preservation program at Bucks County Community College. Since permission is both legally and ethically necessary for archaeological excavations, the team has worked on the grounds of the Meeting with the support and blessing of the Bristol Friends since 2018. The project serves a dual purpose of involving the public in real archaeological research and learning more about the early colonial town.

On November 2, 2024, students and volunteers from Bucks County Community College came with shovels, screens, gloves, safety goggles, and other tools to get hands-on experience at the Friends Meeting House. The students were paired up with professional archaeologists from AECOM and Richard Grubb & Associates to apply what they had been learning in their 3-credit *Historical Archaeology* class. Other members of the public helped with the activities and visited the grounds.

The day's activities involved the hand excavation of holes that archaeologists refer to as "shovel test pits". The shovel test pits are smaller than the square holes ("units") commonly excavated at sites and are typically 2 to 3 feet in size. They can be circular or square in shape. Hand shovels, masonry trowels, and brute strength are needed to excavate down two and sometimes three feet deep. The soil removed from the pits is placed in screens to recover artifacts, with different layers of soil determined by color and texture changes. These different layers provide information about how the archaeological site was formed. The artifacts found in the pits are bagged separately by these different layers so that they can be analyzed as people in the past deposited them. The artifact bags are labeled by pit and layer and recorded in the paperwork so that information can always be accessible.

While we've typically done larger excavation units at the Friends Meeting House, the team took advantage of a lot of help from professionals to get a better overall sense of the landscape on the Meeting House property by using shovel test pits. Shovel test pits are an important method used by professional archaeologists to locate and investigate archaeological sites. They can tell archaeologists a lot about where sites might be located, what kind of information they may be able to tell a skilled archaeologist, and the general landscape history of the area. These pits are excavated at standardized distances and pit locations are mapped. Although every state has slightly different regulations, a typical survey of an acre of ground usually has about 20 shovel test pits spaced 50 feet apart in a gridded fashion.

These pits are usually used by archaeologists early in projects to get the big picture of a site and find where artifacts are concentrated. After shovel test pits have been excavated across the site, then archaeologists can do more focused excavations in the heart of the site. When the team began work on the Friends

Meeting House in 2018, Jesse and Meagan excavated a handful of shovel test pits to help identify promising locations for the following years' excavations, but some questions remained about what the rest of the yard area might look like below the ground's surface.

Five shovel test pits were lined up 10 feet northwest of the Market Street sidewalk. Each of the five groups dug one pit over the course of the day. This year's drought meant that the blustery conditions blew around a lot of dust while the team was working, but the students were great sports! The findings from the pits varied and contained artifacts dating from recent times back to the 19th century and earlier. One hole contained large brick fragments over two feet below the surface. The bottom to a black glazed redware container was found only about one foot down in another shovel test pit. Preliminary results suggested that people had moved a lot more earth around the landscape than the team had expected, but further analysis is ongoing to figure out when and what that means for the site. At the end of the day, the pits were filled back in with the dirt that had been excavated out of them and the process of cleaning and analyzing the artifacts began.

Prior updates about this project are available in past issues of the *Gazette*. Keep an eye out for additional information or dig dates as the work progresses!



Invention of the Zamboni

By Harold Mitchener

When this writer was younger Silver Lake in Bristol was a good place to use my ice skates. The canal also froze in winter and that could be used. Sometimes there were ruts in the ice and one had to be careful not to fall.

This was the beginning of the Zamboni use in ice rinks. In 1954 the Boston Bruins became the first NHL team to use a Zamboni. In 1960 the Zamboni made a first appearance at the Winter Olympics. The company also sold their first electric model in 1978.

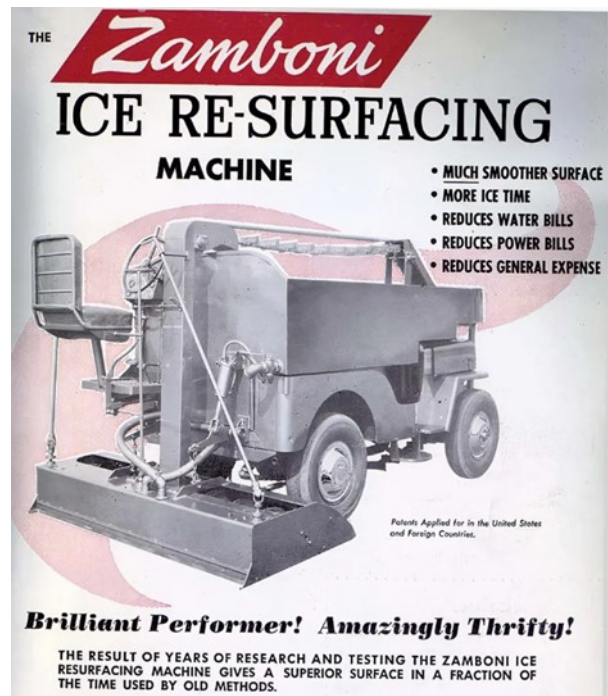
Frank Joseph Zamboni was born in 1901. His parents were Italian immigrants who settled in Utah and then moved to Idaho. The family didn't have much money and Frank at age 15 was asked by his parents to leave school and help on the farm. Frank learned to keep the tractors in running condition. He also found a job in a local garage as a mechanic.

If you watch ice hockey on TV or go in person to watch a game remember Frank Zamboni when they clean the ice.

Source: Smithsonian Magazine Nov. 2023 and this writer's personal memory.

Frank and his brother Lawrence opened an electrical component and servicing business in Southern California. They also got into ice-making to be used for the railroads. They made 300 pound slabs to as refrigeration for shipping items that would spoil if they were not kept cold.

In 1939 they sold their business that sold ice, but they kept the refrigeration items and took those across the street and opened an ice-skating rink. They found that resurfacing the ice was difficult. The rink ice was only three-quarters of an inch thick and could be easily damaged. By hand they had to use manual tools like planers, hoses and squeegees. In 1942 Frank decided that this kind of work was too difficult. He experimented with the idea of cleaning the ice. Frank experimented with a machine. In 1949 after experimenting, he finally had a machine called Zamboni Model A. He used this machine to resurface his 20,000 square foot ice rink in 10 minutes



HEAR ALL ABOUT HER

On **Sunday, February 23, at 2 p.m.** in BCHF headquarters, Kim Haley of the American Historical Theatre of Philadelphia will do a first-person portrayal of **Harriet Beecher Stowe**, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The emotionally charged stories of Uncle Tom, Eliza and Little Eva helped move the conscience of our country to the great and imperative cause of Abolitionism. It energized anti-slavery forces in the American North, while provoking widespread anger in the pro-slavery South. It is alleged that when Stowe met Abraham Lincoln, he said: "So you are the little woman that wrote the book that started this great war."

Light refreshment will be served. A donation of \$5 per adult attendee is suggested; students are free. The public is welcome. Invite your family members and friends!

Corrections to November 2024 Gazette.

The 1824 Flower Girl was Mary Booz Vansant not Carol

The First Place winner of the Bristol Day Student Art Contest was St. Mark, 8th Grade student Molly Balcer.

OUT OF THE PAST

The following items were excerpted from the Bristol Courier January 1925

January 2- Baby blizzard envelopes Pennsylvania and nearby states.

Forrest Theatre Mill St. and New Highway. 2 shows 7PP & 9 PM. Admission 15 ¢ “Married Flirts”.

American Stores: 3 cans of Campbells Pork and Beans 25¢

For Sale – Brick dwelling on Jefferson Ave. contains 6 rooms and a bath. Corner property, all conveniences. \$5,500

Mr. and Mrs. George R. Delong and family are moving from 520 Radcliffe St. to Overbrook.

January 3- truckload of firewood split in stove length. Delivered. Cash on Delivery. \$5.00 a truckload.

January 5 - Bracken Post 382 of American Legion is requesting donations of books to start their own library.

January 6- Governor Pinchot addressed a joint session of the Legislature pledging to “enforce the law, clean up the financial mess and reorganize the state government into an economical business machine.

High School student Clarence Young, son of the postmaster lost his violin while helping a motorist push his car out of a snow drift. A reward is being offered for its return.

Residence Sites of the Bloomsdale Estates Company are offered for sale to anyone considering building a home. Water service of Bristol Borough is on the property. Concrete highway to be built in front of these sites. Francis Byers, sales agent.

Beaver Fire Company #4 is raising \$7,000 toward a Building Fund of \$10,000 for a new station on Mansion Street.

Bristol Travel Club enjoyed an afternoon of music. Mrs. Henry Ancker presided over the business meeting prior to the musical program featuring Russian composers.

Beginning February 1 Manual Training will be introduced for male students in the high school and 7th and 8th grades. They are seeking an instructor.

January 12- President Coolidge will begin his own administration on March 4th with only a few cabinet members inherited from the late President Harding 18 months ago.

John Smith Otter St. Bristol, Wholesale Meat Market offers Sirloin Steak at 22¢/lb., Pork Loins at 22¢/lb., Large Ham at 19¢ a lb.

January 14 -Studebaker Sales and Service-Agent Howard J. Byers. Studebaker reduces prices
Standard Six Sedan - \$1545,
Special Six Sedan - \$1985,
Big Six Sedan \$2575.

January 15- Mothers Association of Bristol High School met in the afternoon with 60 in attendance. Matters of interest to mothers concerning their children in public school were discussed and a musical program was rendered by the High School Students.

January 16- Library report shows increased demand for books. Board of Managers included Miss. Margaret R. Grundy, Miss Annie B. Landreth and others. A total of 5555 cards have been issued and 50% are active.

January 19—total eclipse of the sun on January 24th. This is the first time in more than 100 years.

January 23 - Automobile slid down the hill leading from Mulberry St. to the Delaware River and dropped off the wharf into 8 – 10 ft. of water. Joseph Sweeney of Buckley St. was the occupant. Dennis Roche, James Sweeney and Harold Lake rescued him. He blamed the icy road.



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BCHF Calendar Of Events For 2025

FEBRUARY. Sun., 2/23, 2 PM, at BCHF headquarters. 1st-person portrayal of Harriet Beecher Stowe by Kim Hanley of the American Historical Theatre of Phila. Light refreshment will be served. A donation of \$5 per adult attendee is suggested; students are free.

MARCH. Possible program on a Sunday at 2 PM in BCHF headquarters. Topic and date not yet determined. Check website www.bristolhistory.org.

APRIL Thurs., 4/10. Bus trip to the Swaminarayan Akshardham in Robbinsville, NJ, with 3-course luncheon at the Cranberry Inn and a visit to David Bradley Chocolatier. The immense BPAS Swaminarayan in Robbinsville is the largest Hindu temple outside of India. It was built between 2015 and 2023. \$120 pp for BCHF members; \$130 for non-members. Reservation deadline: March 15. Call 215-788-2106 for flyer/reservation form or print it from our website www.bristolhistory.org.

APRIL Sun., 4/27, 2-4 PM. BCHF headquarters. Annual Tea, with traditional Tea fare. More info in a future Gazette.

MAY. May 10-17. "Pacific Wine Country" Cruise aboard the Sapphire Princess. Ports-of-call: Los Angeles, San Diego & San Francisco, CA; Astoria, OR; Victoria & Vancouver, Canada. See article **On the Move in 2025** in this issue for details.

JUNE. Thurs., 6/26. Bus trip to Phila., with a 3-course luncheon on the Moshulu, the oldest & largest square-rigged sailing vessel still afloat, followed by a tour of the Masonic Temple, a National Historic Landmark, constructed in 1873. It is considered one of the great "wonders" of the Masonic world. \$130 pp for BCHF members; \$140 for non-members. Reservation deadline: May 21. Call 215-788-9408 for flyer/reservation form or print it from our website www.bristolhistory.org.

JULY. July 1-8. "Independence Day Celebration aboard Cunard Lines' Queen Mary 2, sailing from NY. Ports-of-call: Newport, RI; Boston, MA; and Halifax, Nova Scotia. See the article **On the Move in 2025** in this issue for details.

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)

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