



The Gazette



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.

VOL 44
No. 4

APRIL 2026

President's Corner Dear Members:

We are looking forward to BCHF events and programs throughout the year; many are highlighted in this issue. On March 10, a meeting was held to plan for Historic Bristol Day and fund raising was highlighted. BCHF's website has been updated to include a landing page for Historic Bristol Day. All the event information, past issues of the Gazette, and foundation information are linked on BCHF's main website. Thank you to everyone that recently renewed your membership. Membership includes receiving copies of the Gazette and other perks.

The Gazette is published during the months of February, March, April, May, June, September, October, November, and December. Recently, the BCHF received an email from Dr. Bernard Sobel, son of a founding BCHF member, who enjoyed the article about the Chevaux-de-frise published in March issue of the Gazette. Feel free to send feedback and content for the future issues of the Gazette.

Sincerely Jesse Walker

To support the 50th Anniversary of Historic Bristol Day, we are hosting two special fundraising initiatives that help ensure this milestone celebration is bigger and better than ever. The first is a commemorative raffle, giving participants a chance to win great prizes while directly supporting the planning and programming of the event. We are also offering limited-edition anniversary merchandise, allowing supporters to celebrate Bristol's history while helping raise the funds needed to make this historic year truly memorable for the entire community.



Bristol Cultural & Historical Foundation

April 1, 2026

Dear Friend of BCHF:

This year marks a very special milestone for our community. In 2026, Historic Bristol Day will celebrate its **50th anniversary (along with America250)**, continuing a tradition that began when residents first came together to showcase Bristol's rich history, beautiful homes, local organizations, and vibrant community spirit. The celebration will be **Saturday, October 17, 2026**.

For fifty years, Historic Bristol Day has been a celebration of the people, places, and stories that make Bristol such a unique town. As we prepare for this anniversary celebration, BCHF is working to make this year's event bigger and better, with additional entertainment, activities, and experiences for residents and visitors alike.

We are very fortunate to be able to host this favorite event once again. We also know it may be difficult for some to donate what they have in the past. However, a contribution of any size will be deeply appreciated, and will help our organization achieve another successful event.

As we plan this event, may we count on your financial contribution (no matter the size) that will assist us in achieving our goal of making Historic Bristol Day an outstanding community event? Your contribution will be acknowledged in BCHF's publications and again, will be greatly valued during these difficult times. We cannot pull off this major undertaking without your generous support and assistance.

A response **no later than August 31st** would be appreciated. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Nicholas A Rizzo

Nicholas A. Rizzo

Bristol Day Fundraising Chair

Please make a check payable to:

BCHF

P.O. Box 215

Bristol, PA 19007

Name as it is to appear in acknowledgement: _____

Donation: \$25_____ \$50_____ \$75_____ \$100 _____ Other _____



**Bristol Cultural & Historical Foundation
Annual Spring Tea
Honoring Our Red, White, and Blue**

**May 3, 2026 2:00 - 4:00 PM
321 Cedar Street, Bristol Borough**

Reservations: Jan Ruano 215-480-2061

**Traditional Tea Fare \$40
Featuring: Artists of Bristol Art Exhibit**

Pages from Bristol's Past

As Bristol prepares to celebrate the **50th anniversary of Historic Bristol Day**, the *Bristol Cultural & Historical Foundation Gazette* will look back at some of the traditions, events, and moments that have helped shape the life of the borough. Bristol's history is not only found in its buildings and landmarks, but also in the celebrations, gatherings, and shared experiences that have brought neighbors together for generations.

First Night in Bristol: When the Borough Rang in the New Year Together **By: Michael P. Crossan**

For many years, New Year's Eve in Bristol Borough meant more than simply watching the clock strike midnight. It meant gathering in the heart of town for **First Night**, a celebration that filled the borough with music, art, and the warmth of community during the coldest night of the year.

The idea of First Night celebrations began in Boston in 1975 as a way to create a family-friendly New Year's Eve centered on arts, culture, and community entertainment. The concept quickly spread to cities and towns across the country, and Bristol was among the communities that embraced the idea.

The borough proved to be the perfect setting. On New Year's Eve, residents and visitors could stroll through town moving from building to building enjoying performances and activities along the way. Churches, community halls, and local venues opened their doors to host music, storytelling, and entertainment for families and children. Bundled against the winter air, neighbors greeted one another on the streets as the final hours of the year slipped away.

In many ways, the celebration reflected what Bristol has always been. Founded in 1681 along the Delaware River, the borough has long been a place where people gather. From its early days as a ferry crossing and river port to the festivals and events that fill Mill Street today, Bristol's history has been shaped by community celebrations.

First Night was simply another chapter in that story.

The event gave residents a chance to welcome the new year together in the streets and buildings of their town. It was not about grand spectacles or distant fireworks, but about neighbors sharing an evening together, enjoying music, laughter, and the promise of a new year ahead.

Today, many of those same streets fill with visitors each October for **Historic Bristol Day**, itself now celebrating fifty years as one of the borough's most cherished traditions. Like First Night before it, the event reminds us that Bristol's greatest strength has always been its sense of community.

And if Bristol's long history tells us anything, it is that this town has never needed much of an excuse to gather together and celebrate.

Were you part of First Night in Bristol as a visitor, volunteer, or performer? We'd love to hear your memories. Share them on our website: www.bristolhistory.org/memories.html



Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty Trip

Did your parents or grandparents immigrate to the U.S. through Ellis Island? Over 12 million immigrants were processed at this primary U.S. federal immigration port from 1892 and 1924. On June 24, 2026, BCHF will be sponsoring a trip to Ellis Island and to Liberty Island. On Ellis Island, travelers can visit the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration, featuring restored processing areas, the Great Hall, and the American Family Immigration History Center, where visitors can search records of the 12 million immigrants. On Liberty Island, visitors will be able to visit the pedestal-level museum, explore the gift shop, and take in panoramic views of the New York City skyline and Ellis Island. Following the visit to the islands, we will have dinner at The

Cranbury Inn in Cranbury, NJ, a historic, rustic restaurant dating back to the mid-1700s, often cited as the oldest in New Jersey. It serves classic American fare in a charming, colonial setting. Known for its cozy atmosphere and reported resident ghost, "George".

To download a flyer/form, visit <https://www.bristolhistory.org/Trips-.html> or call Deborah Pinney at 215-788-7537 to get one in the mail. The cost for members is \$162, non-members \$172. Note, ferry rides require a government issued photo id (e.g. valid driver's license or passport).



Photo credit: National Park Service

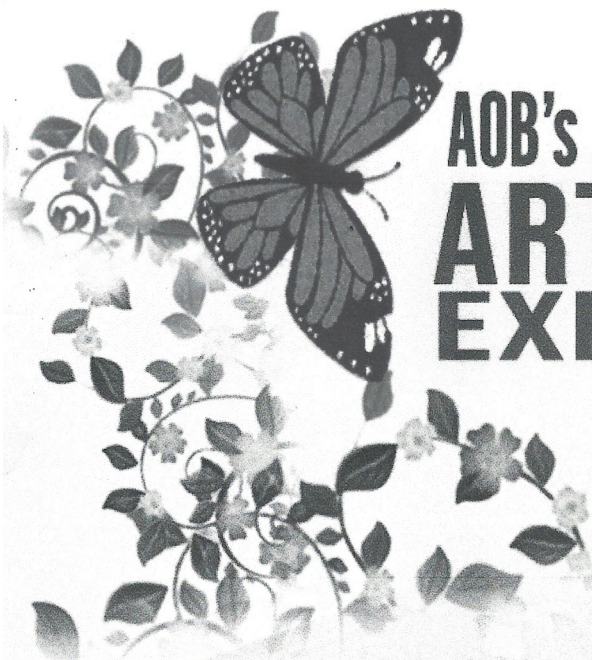
Looking Ahead to Upcoming Programs

June 28, 2026 @ 2 PM – Concert by BCHF Bristol Community Band.

This exciting and exceptionally enjoyable musical powerhouse, featuring a dedicated ensemble of 23 professional and semi-professional musicians will have you tapping your toes. Light refreshments will be served. Donation of \$5 per adult is suggested, students are free.

July 26, 2026 @ 2 PM - The Galapagos Islands an Evolutionary Laboratory

Bob Mercer, Former Director/Naturalist at Silver Lake Nature Center will share his experiences in the Galapagos Islands. Donation of \$5 per adult is suggested, students are free.



AOB's ART EXHIBIT *Spring*



**BRISTOL CULTURAL & HISTORIC FOUNDATION
321 CEDAR ST. BRISTOL, PA 19007**

OPENING RECEPTION

WITH LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

FRI. MAY 8TH 2026

6PM - 8PM



The Artists of Bristol

**IN COOPERATION WITH THE
Bristol Cultural & Historic Foundation**

WILL HAVE ON DISPLAY CAPTIVATING & ORIGINAL FRAMED ARTWORK!

***EACH CREATIVE PIECE IS READY
FOR HANGING & PURCHASE!***



Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from The Bristol Courier April 1926 2¢ a Copy

April 1 – The telephone company agreed to move transmission lines along Mill St. They will be placed in conduit beneath the concrete street which is to be rebuilt. Poles carrying distribution wires will be placed in the rear yards on both side of the street.

150th Anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence will be observed by the Sesquicentennial International Exposition which open in Philadelphia on May 31, 1926.

American Stores: Smoked Hams whole or Half - 30¢/LB. Chicken – 40¢/ LB. Eggs 32¢/Doz.

April 3 – On April 8th & 9th a cast of 175 will be at the Forrest Theatre to present “Kathleen”. The high school orchestra will accompany all the songs in this high school show.

April 10th is the deadline to submit an eligibility coupon to participate in the Bristol Boys Week on May 28, 1926.

April 6 – The Fathers’ Association of Bristol High School presented prizes to the winners of the oration and essay contests.

April 7 – Chemistry teacher Warren P. Snyder was elected principal of Bristol High School. There are a few vacancies expected for the next school year. Several are due to the women planning marriage. The School Board does not employ married women as teachers.

Ladies Aid of the Harriman M. E. Church will hold a bake sale on Sat. at 10 Am at 1610 Farragut Ave.

April 8 – 7 Acres along the Delaware River that was once the Merchant Ship Building Co. has been sold. The type of industry was not disclosed. 14 acres remain unsold.

April 9 – The first presentation of the high school show “Kathleen” was a decided success. Patrons said it was the best musical comedy ever given by the High School. Tickets are 50¢, 75¢ & \$1.

April 10 – Bristol is facing a real boom as 3 industries have located here in the past 12 months. The Huff-Daland Airplane Co. was first, Then the Pacific Steel Boiler Co. The third not yet named will be employing men.

Forrest Theatre on Mill St. offers the film “The Eagle” starring Rudolph Valentino Mon – Wed.

April 12 – Officers in Bristol Boro have been instructed by the Chief to place those driving recklessly under arrest.

April 13 – Bristol Borough will re-advertise for bids for the paving of Otter, Mill and Radcliffe streets due to an error made in the Harrisburg office of the Highway Department.

April 14 – M. J. Hill of Bristol purchased the last available acres of the former ship building property. He plans to bring new industries to Bristol.

April 15 – Young Men’s Association of Bristol celebrated its 19th Anniversary with a banquet and dance in the St. James Parish House. 100 attended and enjoyed the music by Delia’s Serenade Orchestra.

April 16 – Fathers’ Association of Bristol High School now has over 300 members.

April 17 – Bristol Police Dept. will now use an auto to patrol the streets. Annexation of the village of Harriman increased the territory the police needed to cover. Without a car they needed to use a taxi or commandeer a private car for a hurry call.

Nash Ajax 6, 4 door sedan \$995 at William E. DeGroot 341 Jefferson Ave.

April 19 – Great Britain will aid the U. S. to halt rum running. They will use their naval forces to suppress rum running between the Bahamas and the US, during this time of prohibition.

April 20 – A grand Minstrel, Vaudeville Moving Picture Show will be given by the Bristol Fire Dept. on Thurs. & Fri. April 22 & 23 at 8 PM at the Forrest Theatre.

April 23 – The Sesqui Chorus which will perform on July 5th is requesting those interested in joining to be at the St. James Parish House at Wood & Walnut at 8 PM on Monday. A huge chorus is desired.

April 24 – The Travel Club celebrated its 25th Anniversary with an elaborate luncheon served at the St. James Parish House.

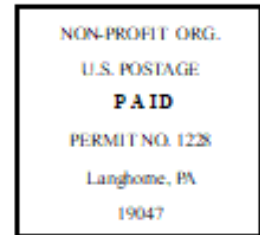
April 26 – Fire damaged a building on Farragut Ave. owned by Joseph Lentine. The loss was put at \$5,000. The unoccupied building was a store and a dwelling. Many rumors floated as to the cause.

April 27 – The Lentine fire was reported as arson.

April 29 – A zinc industry is to locate here soon. It is the area adjoining the Huff-Daland Airplane Co.



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Calendar of Events For 2026

May 3, 2026 @ 2 – 4 PM. Annual Tea – Honoring Our Red White and Blue. Reservations: Jan Ruano @ 215-480-2061

May 8, 2026 @ 6 – 8 PM - The Artists of Bristol Spring Art Exhibit at BCHF. Refreshments will be served. All art will be available for sale.

June 24, 2026 - Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Tour with dinner at the Historic Cranberry Inn. \$162 for members/\$172 for non-members. Call 215-788-7537 to request a registration form.

June 28, 2026 @ 2 PM - Concert by BCHF Community Band. Adults \$5 donation, students free. Light Refreshments will be served.

July 26, 2026 @ 2 PM – Bob Mercer presents The Galapagos Islands and Evolutionary Laboratory

July 29, 2026 - Whale Watching off the coast of Belmar, NJ off Belmar, NJ. \$95 for members/\$105 for non-members. Call 215-788-7537 to request a registration form.

August 10, 2026 @ 2 – 4 PM- Peach Social

August to September, 2026. Celebrity Cruise Line's "Best of Greece" cruise, August 29 to September 7. The itinerary includes a pre-night stay in Athens and includes round-trip airfare from Philadelphia, range from \$5,007 to \$5,821 pp double. A Passport is required. Final payment is due by May 1, 2026.

September 17, 2026 – Luncheon Cruise Onboard the Paddle-Wheel Riverboat "River Lady" \$132 for members/\$142 for non-members. Call 215-788-7537 to request a registration form.

October 17, 2026 – Historic Bristol Day

October 28, 2026 - The Strasburg Railroad and the Choo Choo Barn With Lunch at Casey Jones' Restaurant \$156 for members/\$166 for non-members. Call 215-788-7537 to request a registration form.

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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