



The Gazette



Published by 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 41
No. 1

JANUARY 2023

President's Corner

Dr. Julius Sobel, distinguished member of BCHF's first board

Starting in 1965, a group of people interested in Bristol's cultural resources, met periodically at Joseph E. Pavone's art gallery on Franklin Street for lectures and discussions.

After a couple years, in 1967, they decided to formalize the group by incorporating and forming a non-profit organization, the Radcliffe Cultural and Historical Foundation. The newly formed foundation wrote a set of bylaws and elected a board of directors.

The first board of director's officers were president Joseph Pavone, vice president William Scolere, and recording secretary Reva Kaplan. The other board members of the 15-member board included Richard Carlson, Kenneth Pierce, Charles Richman, Robert Cox, Mrs. Julius Sobel, Seymour Kaplan, George C. Gray, Dr. Ruth Stekert, Dr. Jerome Krongold, Edward L. Tracy, Margarite Matthews, and Dr. Julius Sobel.

Dr. Julius Sobel stands out due to his very distinguished career in osteopathic medicine and his efforts to enhance and enrich his community. Dr. Sobel graduated from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy in 1928 with certificates in bacteriology and clinical chemistry. He took a premedical course at Villanova College and went on to graduate from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathy in 1934.

Two years later, in 1936, Dr. Sobel opened his first medical office on 413 Mill Street. He also lived in that same building. Dr. Sobel's early practice was primarily general practice and obstetrics. He tirelessly treated the citizens of Bristol and the surrounding area, often with little or no assistance. He delivered hundreds of the areas babies and was one of the founders of the Delaware Valley Hospital which was incorporated in 1956 and was in the Harriman District of Bristol. Dr. Sobel was the chairman of the department of proctology. He belonged to many professional organizations such as the Eastern Proctologic Society and was an offi-

cer or trustee in several. In addition to his professional associations, Dr. Sobel was an active participant in many benevolent and civic-minded organizations like the Bristol Macabees and BCHF. Over the years, Dr. Sobel earned the admiration and gratitude of the thousands of his patients, his colleagues, and his community. Sadly, Dr. Sobel passed away on November 24, 1978.

Dr. Sobel's son, Dr. Bernard Sobel, has graciously offered to allow BCHF to display his father's portrait in our building on Cedar Street. We are honored to have the opportunity to welcome Dr. Sobel back to our community where, as his son expressed it, his "commitment to Bristol and its citizens was boundless".

Debbie Pinney, President

Information for this article courtesy of the Grundy Library Archives



Dr. Julius Sobel



Membership Meeting

Our annual membership meeting was held on November 16th at our headquarters building on Cedar Street. At the meeting we reelected Anna Larrisey, Harold Mitchener, Nick Rizzo, and Jan Ruano to serve another three-year term on the board of directors. President Deborah Pinney extended our appreciation to two of our outstanding board members, Mary Kehoe, and Helen Younglove who found it necessary to leave the board before the end of their terms. Their presence will be greatly missed. We are fortunate to have Joe Dugan and Suzanne Antonelli to fill out their terms. Each officer is elected to a three-year term, and if they are unable to complete the time, the president is authorized to appoint replacements.

Some of the announcement made at the meeting were as following; Wi-Fi is now available in the building; Membership sign-up and payment is now available on our website; The annual Bristol High School scholarships were awarded to four students

in the amount of \$2250.00.

After the brief business meeting we were enthralled by the presentation on Mosaic Art given by local artist Pat Buchanan. Pat shared images of Mosaic Art found in places like Ravenna, Italy as well as some of her own mosaic pieces. The program was well received by all those present.

After the program we all settled down to enjoy the wonderful treats provided by President Pinney.

Please put the third Wednesday of November on your calendar to attend the next membership meeting. We would like to see many of you there in the future.



Trip To The Bronx

The trip to the Bronx on December 1st was delightful. The weather was sunny, however a bit brisk. The first stop was to Arthur Avenue to do some holiday food shopping. Then on to Mario's Restaurant for lunch. After lunch we went to the Botanical Gardens which featured their 30th Annual Holiday Train Show. The highlight of the show was the enchanting display of more than 175 famous New York landmarks which were re-created from natural materials such as pinecones, acorns, and seeds. It was a wonder to behold. The entire trip was

so well received that we are thinking of repeating it next year, perhaps in the Spring or early December. Spring would let us visit the Gardens in bloom and December would be good for the Annual Train Show. If you have any interest in going on the trip let us know. That will help us to make our plans. Just send an email to our trip planner Helen Younglove at nonelie@verizon.net.



Arthur Avenue



Train Show at the Botanical Gardens

Valley Forge

On October 20 BCHF sponsored a bus trip to historic Valley Forge and West Chester. Here are a few photos of that trip.



General Washington's Headquarters

Part of our group boarding a restored traincar for a round-trip ride to the Village of Glen Mills



Muhlenberg Brigade Huts

OOPS!

Calm Waters was inadvertently left out of our list of in-kind sponsors for Historic Bristol Day. We thank them for their contribution.

Also our apologies to long-time supporter of BCHF, Dr. Joanne Hullings (not Humphreys)

Land Where #221 Radcliffe St. Is Located

Today there is a brick home which stands on a lot next to the former Bristol Presbyterian Church (now called the Baptist Community Church). That home was built by William Kinsey in 1834; however, the lot was originally called the "Prison Lot". The lot ran through to Cedar Street and in 1705 a Bucks County Court House was erected there. In 1725 the Court House was moved to Newtown. After the Court was moved, this plot of ground was sold to John DeNormandie who held it until 1772 when he sold it to the Borough of Bristol.

What is known about the DeNormandie family? They were a "princely" family from France. They had feudal land in Champagne for many years. The heads of this house were: Lords de la Motte; Guillaume De Normandie became royal governor of Noyon which is in Picardy and he established the chapel of St. Claire in the church of St. Marten; Guillaume of Mandie married a princess of the DeRoye family.

One of the descendents was Laurent DeNormandie who was a supporter of Calvin (a Protestant). Since France was a Roman Catholic country, many Calvinists had to flee. The people who fled France were called "French Huguenots" and it was Calvin who established the basis for the Presbyterian Church. Guillaume was executor of Calvin's will. Calvin and his sons fled to Geneva, Switzerland and there they held some of the highest offices in that country. From Laurent came Jean DeNormandie who was one of the deputies sent in 1630 to conclude the peace treaty with

the prince of Savoy. A son named Joseph and a grandson named Michael were all counselors of state in Geneva.

Andre (born in Geneva in 1651) came to America in 1706 with his two sons and settled in Bristol. The children of the two sons married into the families of Bard of Burlington and Anderson. Some of the DeNormandies sided with England in the Revolutionary War and got into trouble in Bristol; others were on the Continental side with George Washington. These family members were good citizens in the church. Some of them were physicians with a large practice in the area. Dr. John DeNormandie, who practiced medicine in Bristol, was placed in charge of the hospital which was at the Friends Meeting House on Market and Wood Streets during the Revolutionary War.

In St. James Cemetery on Walnut Street, there are quite a few graves marked with the name DeNormandie (Andrew, Abraham, Henriette, Elizabeth, William, John, Mary, Rebecca and Sarah). "William" in English is "Guillaume" in French. Think about this family when you are walking on Radcliffe Street and passing #221 or are in St. James Episcopal Cemetery where many of the DeNormandie family are interred.

Information for this story was taken from St. James grave records and from History of Old Homes on Radcliffe Street - Bristol - 1938 by Doron Green.



"Over There"

On **Sunday, January 29 at 2 PM**, BCHF will host professional actor Neill Hartley and his fully staged, one-man show entitled "*Over There: Songs and Letters of WWI*". This nostalgic program is sure to delight one and all. Light refreshments will follow the presentation.

Location: BCHF headquarters at 321 Cedar Street

Donation requested: \$5 per adult; students are free

Snow date is Sunday, February 26

Bristol Firsts

The following items were taken from Bristol Borough's Tricentennial Celebration Booklet published in 1981.

- * In 1681 Samuel Cllift started the Ferry House, the oldest inn in the United States in continuous service.
- * In 1683 the first postal system included Bristol.
- * The first marriage by proxy in the United States occurred on Radcliffe Street in 1816.
- * The Bracken Cadets were the first Junior Drum and Bugle Corps in the United States in 1924.
- * The first seed producer in Pennsylvania was David Landreth in 1784.
- * The first barge entered the Delaware Canal at Bristol in 1832.

Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from January 1933 issues of THE BRISTOL COURIER.

1/3 – “SNOW-LADEN” X'MAS TREE ATTRACTS AT CARTER HOME. Many passersby halted in front of the home of M. L. Carter, 555 Swain Street, to get a better glimpse of the “snow-covered” and elaborately decorated Christmas tree. A sassafras tree has been transformed by use of cotton into a mass of “snow-laden” boughs. Scores of varicolored balls and dozens of blinking electric lights bring out the brilliance of the scene, while beneath is a village, likewise snow-covered.

ANNOUNCE WINNERS IN DECORATING CONTEST. Judges in the exterior lighting contest sponsored by the Exchange Club today announced their decisions for the first three places, and also placed two on the “honorable mention” list. Robert C. Ruehl, Cedar Street, was given first honors. Dr. George T. Fox, Radcliffe Street, was awarded second place. Harold Hunter, Mulberry Street, was third. Charles G. Rathke, Pond Street, was placed first on the honorable mention list. Mrs. Robert Moore, Monroe Street, had a winter display mentioned for its integrity.

1/5 – BABY DERBY WINNERS ANNOUNCED. The first baby and winner of the Baby Derby was Jeanne Elizabeth Goodman, daughter of Reuben and Corella Goodman, of Bellevue Avenue, Croydon, born 3:28 p.m., January 1. The attending physician was Dr. Thorne S. Harris. Other children who receive honorable mention were: Donald Paul Hearn, born at Dr. Wagner's private hospital on January 4 at 3:04 a.m., Dr. Frank Lehman attending; and Mary, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Clapham, of Bath Road, born in Harriman Hospital, January 4 at 5 p.m., Dr. George T. Fox, physician.

1/6 – TROLLEY LINE IS BEING ABANDONED; DISMANTLE ROAD. The Trenton, Bristol and Philadelphia Railway Company, operating from Torresdale to Trenton, N.J., has been definitely discontinued. Work to dismantle the road is now in progress.

MERCHANTS FORM A RED ARROW CLUB HERE. Although old man depression is on his way out, in order to hasten his going, a number of Bristol merchants have enlisted the services of the Red Arrow Service Company of Springfield, Ill., and fund a Red Arrow Club in Bristol. The merchants have inaugurated a campaign that will provide actual cash benefits for their patrons, as well as numerous enjoyable features of entertainment, and stimulate business generally. Red Arrow money is being issued by the merchants, dollar for dollar, on all cash purchases from ten cents up.

1/10 – “BRISTOL CITY” WENT PAST BRISTOL IN JULY. One of the foremost news events in Bristol during July 1932 was the rousing welcome accorded the “S.S. Bristol City,” first ocean-going vessel to make its way up the Delaware River since deepening of the channel.

COUNCIL PLANS TO SAVE APPROXIMATELY \$8,000 THIS YEAR BY REDUCING WAGES AND

SALARIES OF ALL BORO EMPLOYEES; VOTE TO PUBLISH NAMES OF DELINQUENT WATER ACCOUNTS. Future Road Improvements to Be Kept down to a Minimum.

1/11 – RESOLUTION IS ADOPTED HERE AT W.C.T.U. SESSION. To Ask Political Representatives to Back 18th Amendment. Mrs. Harry Headley, president, read greetings from the national president, Mrs. Ella Boole, on the 13th anniversary of national prohibition.

“HOUSE FOR RENT. Jefferson Ave. 6 rooms and bath. Hot air heater, kitchen range. Rent \$25 per month. Apply E. E. Ratcliffe, agent.”

1/12 – OFFICERS ENDEAVOR TO FIND MAN BELIEVED TO HAVE FIRED BUILDING TODAY. Place Formerly Occupied by St. Ann's Holy Name Society – Property of Benjamin T. Groff Threatened for a Time – Man Seen Running from Building. An incendiary fire gutted a portion of the 2-1/2 story frame and stucco building at 319 Dorrance Street early this morning, causing a loss estimated at approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000, according to a statement by Chief McGee.

“AMERICAN STORES CO.....Gold Seal Eggs – 39c carton of 12. Louella Buter – 27c lb. carton. Asco Sliced Bacon – two ½ lb. pkgs., 19c. Victor Sliced Bread – 5c wrapped loaf. Tender Round Steaks or Roasts – 20c lb. Fancy Boston Mackerel – 3 lbs.. 25c.”

1/16 – INAUGURATE ELECTRIC SERVICE, P.R.R. TODAY. Electric passenger train service through here, between Philadelphia and New York, was inaugurated today by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

“BUFFALO BILL'S” CARRIAGE FALLS PREY TO FLAMES IN \$10,000 FIRE; OUTBUILDINGS, BARN DESTROYED AT PROPERTY IN EDGELY. Fire early this morning destroyed the famous old carriage in which Buffalo Bill rode at the head of his circus parades through the principal cities of the United States and Europe. The ancient vehicle was stored in a wagon house on what is commonly called the “Buffalo Bill” farm, just above Edgely. The farm was originally purchased by Thomas Smith in 1913 as a winter headquarters in the East for the Buffalo Bill circus.

“ARTICLES FOR SALE. Work shoes – 75c. Overcoats – \$2.50 up. Suits – \$2.95 up. Socks – 5c. Ladies Stockings – 10c. ECONOMY CLOTHING COMPANY, 411 Mill Street.”

1/20 – A TALL STORY WAS TALLER THAN THEM ALL. Bristol and Edgely residents, for the second time this week, heard their towns referred to by the well-known radio news dispenser, Lowell Thomas, last evening. Mr. Thomas told of communications received by him from superintendent of public safety, James L. McGee, Bristol, and from the chief of the Headley Manor Fire Company of Edgely, in which denials were given as to the authenticity of a story recounted by Thomas on Monday evening, in which he quoted from metropolitan newspapers about an alleged water fight between fire-

continued on next page

More Photos of Historic Bristol Day



Tours of the Grundy Museum



Mignoni Jewelry on Mill Street celebrates an historic anniversary



Open Houses



BCHF's Bake Table full of treats was sure to satisfy every sweet tooth

Photos courtesy of Grace Reider

Out of the Past . . . continued

men from the Bristol Consolidated and Headley Manor companies. "It seems I was in error," stated Thomas. The erroneous report concerned the Buffalo Bill Farm fire in Edgely.

"DRIES' FURNITURE SALE STARTS TODAY! Coffee Table with Glass Tray - \$1.95. 4-Pc. Two-Tone Walnut Veneered Bedroom Suite - \$59. Four-Post Beds, Strongly Built - \$7.95. Turkish Towels, Size 20 x 10 - 10c. Mill and Pond Streets."

1/27 - COMMERCIAL STUDENTS IN "IMPRESSIONS AND EXPRESSIONS" SHOW RIGHT AND WRONG WAY OF MAKING BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS. The 11th year commercial section, taught by W. E. Shank, staged a sketch entitled "Impressions and Expressions" at Bristol High School auditorium this morning.

ENTERPRISE FIRE CO., NO. 5, CANCELS LAST

DEBT. Pays off \$3,000 Mortgage and Reports \$900 in Treasury. Harry White, president, presided over the short business meeting. It was reported that, during the past four years, not a single member had been expelled for the non-payment of dues.

MOTORISTS BENEFIT BY GAS PRICE CUTS. Yesterday, dealers in products of certain companies began selling gasoline at ten cents per gallon, including tax. This charge included six cents per gallon for the product, three cents State tax and one cent Federal tax.

1/31 - 450 SEE THIRD WARD IN FOURTH STRAIGHT WIN. Two Extra Points Made in Close Fray; Score Ends 23-21. The crowd of 450 filled all corners of the Italian Mutual Aid court and extra seats were placed about the playing floor - so close that special out-of-bounds rules were made by the league officials. Larry David was high scorer for the winning aggregation with nine points.



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Historical Foundation, Inc.**
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BCHF Calendar of Events For 2023

JANUARY. Sun., 1/29, 2 PM. Snow date is Sun., 2/26. Fully staged, one-man show by professional actor Neill Hartley, entitled "Over There: Songs and Letters of WWI." Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. Donation of \$5/adult requested; students free. Payable at the door.

MARCH. Sun., 3/26, 2 PM. Snow date is Sun., 4/2. Presentation by PA Humanities speaker on "The Lenape Indians in Bucks County." Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. Donation of \$5/adult requested; students free. Payable at the door.

APRIL Fri. 4/21, Time TBA. Joint BCHF - ARTISTS OF BRISTOL Art Exhibition opening reception

APRIL Sun., 4/30, 2 to 4 PM. Annual Tea featuring Francis X. Danis at the keyboard. BCHF headquarters. Fee. Advance reservations required.

JUNE Sun., 6/4, 2 PM. Professional storyteller and independent historian Caron Simon Levin's first-person portrayal of Emily Warren Roebling, entitled "Bridge Builder in Petticoats." Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters.

Donation of \$5/adult requested; students free. Payable at door.

AUGUST. Sun., 8/13, 2 to 4 PM. Annual Peach Social at BCHF headquarters. Fee. Take-outs available. Event benefits awards to Bristol High School graduates.

OCTOBER. 10/6-17. Holy Lands & Aegean Majesty (Jerusalem to Rome) cruise on Oceania Cruises' "Oceania Nautica." **Space is going fast!** Call 215-788-9408 for a detailed flyer.

OCTOBER. 10/26 - Nov. 4. 10-day cruise aboard Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's "Vision of the Seas," sailing from Baltimore to King's Wharf, Bermuda, Nassau, and Cococay, Bahamas. Call 215-788-9408 for a detailed flyer.

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

Follow us on Instagram - -

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THE GAZETTE is a publication of the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Inc. - Nancy Maren, Editor
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