



# 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.

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SEPTEMBER 2023

## President's Corner

### *Fall is Coming and so is Historic Bristol Day*

Summer is waning, and fall is just around the corner. To BCHF and everyone in Bristol, that means Historic Bristol Day will soon be here. Mary Gesualdi and Nick Rizzo, co-chairs of the HBD committee, and everyone else on the sub-committees have been hard at work since March to make this, the 47<sup>th</sup> HBD, the best ever. If you can lend a hand, please contact Mary or Nick, or send an email to [bchf2157819895@gmail.com](mailto:bchf2157819895@gmail.com).

Fall festivals have been a tradition all over north America and Europe for centuries. They are a time to celebrate the harvest and the end of the warm growing months, a last chance to gather before the cold forces people indoors.

Bristol Borough's charter (approved in 1720) authorized fairs in May and October. They were supervised by the Burges and were held on Market and Cedar Streets. These fairs were exciting events where people from Bristol and the surrounding areas got together to sell their goods in booths erected along those streets. People shopped and celebrated, just as they do today. However, unlike our relatively staid and proper behavior, these early Bristol fairs were lively, rollicking events with dancing in the street, drinking, and conduct that eventually offended the more conservative members of the council. In 1773, the Burgess and council moved to discontinue the fair because the number of established shops had increased and the "debauchery, idleness and drunkenness consequent on the meeting of the lowest class of people together is a real evil, and calls for redress". Since the fairs were established by the charter, the council had to wait until the state legislature approved the measure in 1796.

I'm not sure HBD grew out of Bristol's early fall fairs but I am sure that the community enjoys HBD and no one wants it to end.

*A History of Bristol Borough in the County of Bucks, State of Pennsylvania, Doron Green, 1911*

### *Peach Social*

Our annual Peach Social was a success again this year and I would like to thank everyone who helped and everyone who attended. The proceeds from this event are used for awards to graduating Bristol High School Seniors. We served angel food cake topped with New Jersey peaches and hand dipped vanilla ice cream. The treats were served in take out containers so people could enjoy their treats at tables inside the air-conditioned building, at tables outside under the elms, or take them home or to a picnic spot.

This year, and for the first time, the Bracken Cavalier Alumni band played at the social. They presented two shows, one at 2 and one at 3. Each show included the national anthem and other rousing selections. This year is the Bracken's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and we were indeed fortunate to hear them play. We offer them our sincere thanks.

*Debbie Pinney,  
President*



*Above: Peaches ready for peeling just prior to the event.*

*Left: The Bracken Cavalier Alumni band play outside the BCHF building.*

# Mahogany and Steel Boat and Car Show a Rousing Success!

The second annual Mahogany and Steel Boat and Car Show came off without a hitch on Saturday, July 15. Mother Nature delivered a much hotter day than last year but we still had a pretty good turnout of 80 antique and classic cars displayed on the borough parking lot, and 20 antique and classic boats both under the wharf on trailers and docked in the river to the pier closest to Monument Park. In addition to this lineup was a display of cocktail class wooden racing boats, provided by The Cocktail Class Wooden Boat Racing Association (cowbra.com). These are very small racing boats that seat one person. The Bristol High School Drama Club set up a food concession in the park and did very well, selling donuts and coffee in the morning and sausage and pepper sandwiches, hot dogs and cold beverages for lunch. Lists of all the local restaurants within walking distance were distributed, both to the show's participants and attendees.

Ten \$25 King George II gift cards were chanced off to car show participants. This restaurant has been very generous and always donates gift certificates for our shows and "cruise-ins." Due to the extreme heat, we handed out the trophies and gift certificates earlier than planned and started the "cruise-in" at 2:30 rather than 3:00. At all our shows, we give attendees the opportunity to vote for their favorite antique and classic car. The car committee selects the Best of Show, and all the other trophies are based on People's Choice through the voting. Congratulations to the following winners:



**BEST OF SHOW** – 1963 Corvette convertible owned by Bob Pilon of Philadelphia

**1ST PLACE PEOPLE'S CHOICE ANTIQUE** – 1934 Ford 3-window coupe owned by Dave Batten of Bensalem

**2nd PLACE PEOPLE'S CHOICE ANTIQUE** – 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air owned by Tony Pomo of Bensalem

**3RD PLACE PEOPLE'S CHOICE ANTIQUE** – 1932 Ford Roadster owned by Ralph Ciambrello of Levittown

**1ST PLACE PEOPLE'S CHOICE CLASSIC** – 2005 Chevrolet SSR owned by Angelo Bascio of Bristol

**2nd PLACE PEOPLE'S CHOICE CLASSIC WAS A TIE** – 2013 Chevrolet Camaro Hot Wheels owned by Bernie Panard of Levittown and a 2016 Chevrolet Corvette convertible owned by Shawn Smith of Bristol

**3rd PLACE PEOPLE'S CHOICE CLASSIC** – 2003 Chevrolet Corvette owned by Dan Manno of Levittown

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## Emily Roebling

The first-person presentation performed by Carol Simon Levin in June about the time and life of Emily Roebling was excellent.

Emily's husband, Washington Roebling was given the responsibility of building the Brooklyn Bridge after his father, engineer John Augustus Roebling died at the beginning of the bridge's construction because of an accident at the site. John Roebling had developed a system for weaving the type of wire cables used in the design of the bridge. He was highly regarded as a bridge builder. During Washington Roebling's tenure as chief architect he suffered a crippling attack of decompression sickness and was then confined to his home. As he was unable to visit the site or speak directly to the builders, he relied on his wife Emily to deliver instructions and messages to those involved. In essence she had assumed the duties of chief engineer.

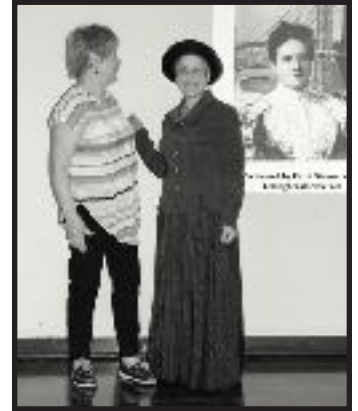
Emily had no formal training in engineering but studied the field on her own. The fact that women were not regarded in those days as being capable of doing this type of work made her contributions even more amazing. She was eventually given recogni-

tion for her contribution to building the bridge. When it was dedicated, she rode the first carriage across the bridge carrying a rooster as a symbol of victory.

Emily also supervised the construction of a new family mansion in Trenton. In 1899 she received a certificate in business law from the Woman's Law Class at New York University.

Our presenter, Carol Levin, was so good at portraying Emily that we felt that we were in her presence. Carol has many other programs in her repertoire. We hope to have her return in the future. When we do, try to attend. You will not be disappointed.

*Photo: BCHF President Debbie Pinney (left) with Carol Simon Levin as Emily Roebling*



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## Brooklyn Lights Tour

Space is going fast on our December 7 bus trip to Brooklyn where we'll view the elaborate Christmas decorations on homes in the Dyker Heights, Bay Ridge and Bensonhurst sections, preceded by a full-course dinner at Tommaso's popular restaurant. This tour was featured on TLC's "Crazy Christmas Lights."

The trip requires getting on and off the bus several times and walking through the decorated streets. The bus will leave from the Grundy Recreation Center on Beaver Street at 1:30 p.m. and return at approximately 10 p.m. The all-inclusive cost is \$169 for BCHF members and \$172 for non-members. Details are on BCHF's website at [www.bristolhistory.org](http://www.bristolhistory.org). For a flyer/reservation form, contact Debbie Pinney at 215-788-7537.

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## 2023 MEMBERSHIP

In the June GAZETTE we listed all members in good standing. Since that time, the following individuals have renewed their membership or joined BCHF. If you have not yet paid your dues, we urge you to renew your membership so that you will continue to get the GAZETTE in the mail with all of this interesting information and will also be able to take advantage of member discounts on trips and events.

*Carole Adamson  
Irene Arhipov  
Phillip Bigelow*

*John & Jean Burton  
Donna Conticchio  
Kathy & Donald Harbison*

*Jerry & Sharon Kline  
Karen Lewin-Dively  
Ron Marcella*

*Roberta Marino  
Susan Rachin  
Renee Rumsey*

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## 2023 Membership Form

**2023 Membership Dues:**     Individual \$15.00     Family \$25.00     Business \$60.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Make check payable to B.C.H. F.    Mail to: B.C.H.F., P.O. Box 215, Bristol, PA 19007*

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## A Peach of A Day!



Angel food cake with vanilla ice cream and freshly sliced peaches were enjoyed by all on Sunday, August 13.



Harold Mitchener and Helen Younglove greet cante Murway and Betty Rodgers as they enter the Peach Social

Below: Debbie Pinney, Jan Ruano and Ceil Graff prepare the bake table loaded with home made goodies



Committee members stop to pose for a group photo. From left: Diane Davidson, Debbie Pinney and Sue Watkins



Left: Everyone enjoyed this special treat

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## First Ever Bristol Mural Arts Tours on Historic Bristol Day

Don't miss out on the first ever Bristol Mural Arts Tours on Historic Bristol Day, Saturday, October 21 at 11:00 and 1:30. Get to know our town's stunning collection of murals by boarding a bus, compliments of the Bristol Borough School District, in front of the Riverside Theatre. Weave through our neighborhoods, getting up close and personal views of our outdoor art gallery. The tours will be docent-led, and you'll get to meet a couple of the muralists along the way.

Participants will start with the mural above the Cantina, on the corner of Mill and Radcliffe. Around the corner is the oldest of our murals, Coca-Cola, painted by Bristol's own Tommy Rudesyle. Several murals are part of the Public Art Program supported by Raising the Bar, a Bristol-based non-profit, supporting economic development in the borough. They include "Settled by the World's People" and "O'Boyles Ice Cream Delivery" or "Come for the History, Stay for the Fun" on Old Route 13, both painted by Jean-Marc Dubus. Harris Comfort, with the help of a façade grant, commissioned Dubus Studio to paint a view depicting a classroom from the late 1800's on the grounds of Bristol's second public school on Otter Street. Artist Jean-Marc Dubus overlaid old views of

Historic Bristol with current scenes from the town.

The Penn Community Bank on Mill Street partnered with Raising the Bar to add an art installation above the back entrance of their drive through. This mural pays tribute to our claim to fame, the Bristol Stomp, and was inspired by a sculpture created by Bridget Ennis Shaw, of a couple doing the Stomp back in 1961. This project was sponsored by the William Penn Bank at Market and Old Route 13 and facilitated by Raising the Bar. Tony Napoli, who was raised on Wood Street in Bristol, painted this mural, and was assisted by John Ennis and Annie Rose Kruzinski.

Visitors will enter the Snyder-Girotti Elementary School to view a mural designed by school students, parents and teachers – along with muralist Jean-Marc Dubus – that depicts seven favorite books chosen by the students and hangs on the wall outside of the school library. The last mural will debut on September 7th at the Raising the Bar Riverport Plaza @ Market and was financed in part by a grant from Visit Bucks County. This will be the largest mural in Bucks County when completed. You'll have the opportunity to meet the artist, Jared Bader.

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## School Days' Memories *by Harold Mitchener*

September is the month when school children return to the classroom. This brings back many memories of my school days in Bristol Borough.

Bristol's first public school was built on Wood Street near Mulberry Street and it opened in 1837.

The second public school was on Otter Street which opened in 1852.

The main focus of this article is on the Bath Street School. It opened in 1881 and the top floors were used as a high school until 1892. It closed as a school in 1956 when Warren Snyder School on Buckley Street opened. The Bath Street School was then used as a furniture warehouse by Dries Furniture. Their store was at Mill and Pond Street. In 1973 the former school house burned and it was replaced by three duplex homes.

This writer's father attended Bath Street School as did this writer. The cost of the lot was \$1,500.00 and the cost of the building was \$15,444.18.

This writer witnessed the planting of a dogwood tree (it remains) on Arbor Day. The tree was planted next to the Taylor House. Their son, Sydney L. Taylor, wrote a book entitled "The Life and Events of Harriet Ross Tubman."

I still remember my teachers and various events with fond memories.

1st grade was Mrs. Blitz, 2nd grade was Miss Cruise, 3rd grade was Miss Connor, 4th grade was Miss Fine, 5th grade was Mrs. Couch, 6th grade was Mrs. Fleming. Miss Stoner was the art teacher and Miss Zerby was the music teacher. Physical education was taught by the classroom teacher. Mrs. Studdle taught special education. Mr. McEwen was

the custodian. He and his family lived next to the school yard toward the railroad. This writer was a member of the bicycle club and was a member of the safety patrol. I had a speech defect and a teacher came from the county to help correct that problem. The art and music teacher, and speech instructors rotated among the elementary schools.

At recess, if a student didn't bring a snack, stick pretzels and cookies were sold for a penny.

Warren Snyder was the Superintendent of School for Bristol Borough. At the Wood Street School (former high school) the 6th grade teacher was Miss Haas and the Principal was Miss Rogers. I became the captain of the Safety Patrol.

When I was in 5th grade my teacher was Mrs. Couch. At Halloween, when we went home for lunch, Mrs. Couch (who lived on Green Lane in Bristol) would go home and bring her collie dog back to school. When we arrived back from lunch with our costumes on, the dog was in one of the seats. We were surprised and everyone wanted to pet the dog. The teacher then treated us with Halloween Candy.

Our bicycle club had a picnic at Silver Lake. U.S. 13 had not been constructed yet and we would ride our bicycles and Mrs. Couch would drive her car and bring our hot dogs and beverages.

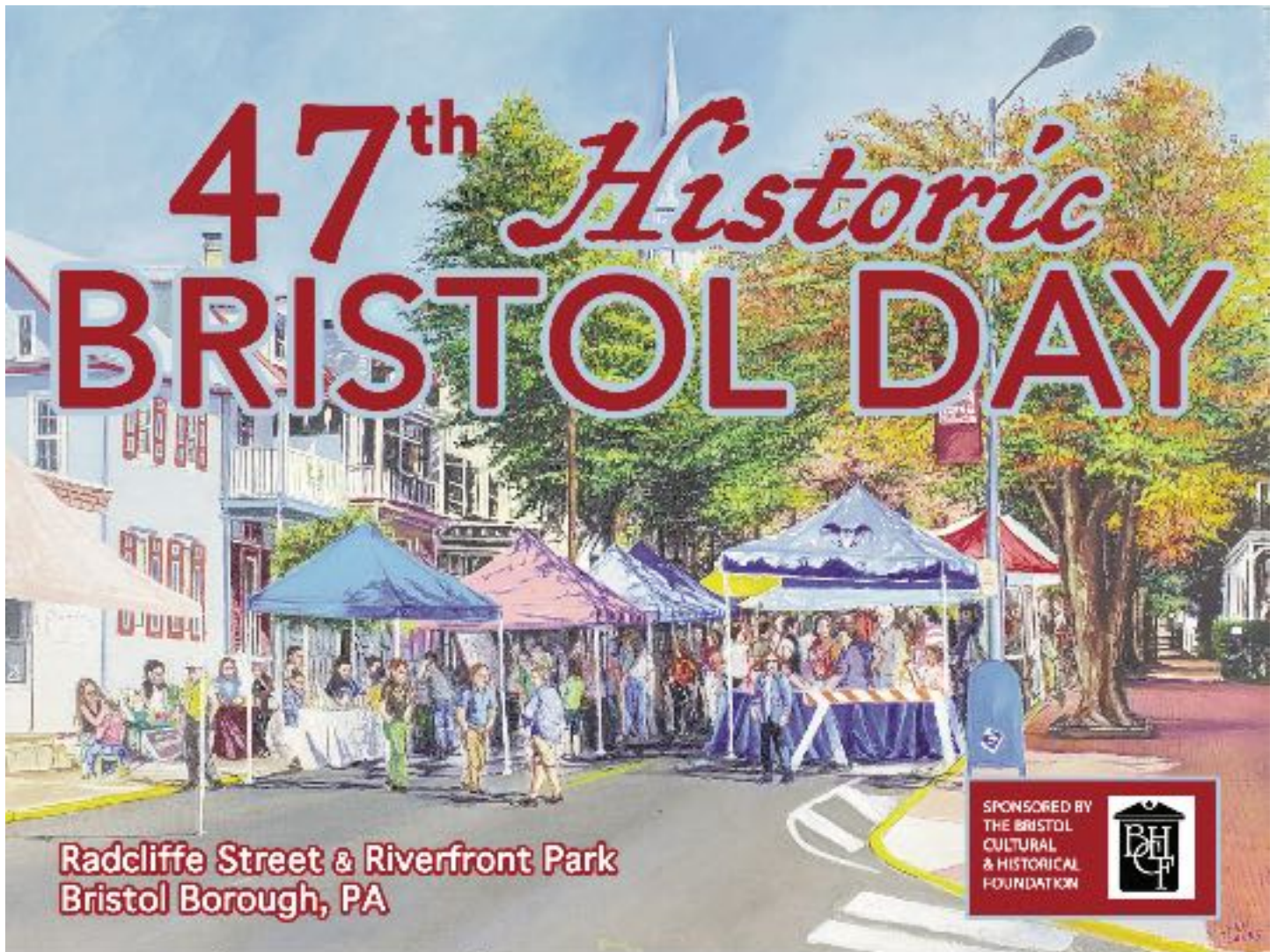
Currently there is one elementary school in Bristol Borough on Beaver Street on a field that was formerly Leedom's Field. Mr. Leedom had a rug making mill across Beaver Street where the Grundy Ice Rink is located.

These are nice memories for this writer. Did you attend Bath Street School? Answer by writing to BCHF, P.O. Box 215, Bristol, PA 19007.



*Sources - Personal memories and History of Bristol, yr. 1911 by Doron Green, and Images of America - Bristol by Harold and Carol Mitchener yr, 2000.*

*Bath Street School*



**Radcliffe Street & Riverfront Park  
Bristol Borough, PA**

SPONSORED BY  
THE BRISTOL  
CULTURAL  
& HISTORICAL  
FOUNDATION



For more information visit [BristolHistory.org](http://BristolHistory.org)

Painting by John Danks

- Schooner North Wind
- Tea on the South Lawn  
of the Grundy Museum
- First Bristol Mural Arts Tour
- Antique Boat Display
- Archaeological Dig
- Car Show
- Children's Corner  
at Grundy Library

- Crafters & Vendors
- Entertainment
- Food Court/Food Trucks
- Grundy Museum
- House Tours
- Public Buildings
- Student Art Show
- Worship Sites
- & much more to come...

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023**  
10 am until 4 pm

Free Shuttle Service

Rain or Shine

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## Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **September 1913** issues of THE BUCKS COUNTY GAZETTE.

9/5 – THE MOOSE EXCURSION. Nearly 2,000 persons went on the excursion given by the Loyal Order of Moose last Sunday. The large steamer “Columbia” had been chartered to take them to Augustine Pier. Several Philadelphia and Trenton pickpockets were discovered among the crowd but were not allowed to work their nefarious games. The Irons’ Band of Burlington and Grim’s Orchestra furnished music throughout the trip.

RE-OPENING OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. The several school grounds and buildings presented an animated appearance on Monday morning last when the schools were reopened for the fall term. 957 children are enrolled.

FOR RENT. 303 Walnut St. \$11.00 per month.”

“Personally-conducted Excursion to Niagara Falls. September 19 and October 3.

\$10.25 Round Trip from Bristol. PENNSYLVANIA R.R.”

### LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

The members of St. Ann’s Church will hold a block party on Friday and Saturday evenings of next week. Booths for the sale of fancy articles, candies, etc., will be erected along Dorrance Street from the old railroad to Pond Street, and along the church front on Pond Street.

9/12 – THE BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY. Growth from Six Subscribers in 1833 to Seven Hundred Stations in 1913. September 15 next will mark the rounding out of thirty years of Bell Telephone service in Bristol. The first telephone office was opened in the Martin Building at 232 Mill Street, with George Callanan in charge.

DEMOCRATS’ MASS MEETING. Hibernian Hall was filled to its seating capacity on Wednesday evening when a mass meeting was held under the auspices of the Wilson and Marshall Democratic Club. James McGinley, president of the club, presided.

LAST FRIDAY’S STORM. The storms of last Friday and again on Sunday evening were most disastrous to the farmers of Bristol Township. Hail stones the size of walnuts fell, cutting the corn as with a scythe, riddling rhubarb like bullets, ripping open the tomatoes, cutting lima beans from the poles, and ruining entire crops. One of the chimneys of the Jefferson Avenue school house was struck by lightning.

FIRST BABY BORN AT MAPLE BEACH. A bright baby boy arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sutcliff at Maple Beach, the new recreation resort on the riverfront south of Bristol.

“THE BELL STORE, Mill and Pond Sts.....Sirloin Steak – 30c pound. Best Rib Roast – 20c pound. Maryland Spring Lamb Chops – 22c pound.”

9/19 – SCHOOL NOTES. A short time ago, the

Superintendent received word from the State School Department at Harrisburg that the Bristol High School is rated as first grade. Nearly all of the class of 1913 are continuing their studies.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE: The Bristol Manufacturing Company, which leased the room over Bell’s Store at Pond and Mill Streets, began business the first of the week with about half of the number of hands they will employ. They expect to have their plant in full working order in about a week, when the music of fifty machines will be heard.

### SPECIAL NOTICES:

Table Boarders Wanted. Reasonable. Mrs. Hanford, 829 Radcliffe St.

House to Rent. 303 Walnut St. \$11.00 per month.

Pepper Pot, 10 cents a quart. Other good things for sale at 11 a.m., Saturday morning. Call at 725 Radcliffe St.

“OYSTERS, OYSTERS! Oyster boat will have oysters at Market St. wharf every Friday. \$1.00 per bushel. Capt. Arthur Windford.”

9/26 – BETTER POLICE PROTECTION NEEDED. Early on Monday morning, miscreants took possession of Mill Street and, not only roused the residents of that section by their hilariousness, but destroyed property, tearing down signs, wresting bread boxes from their fastenings, and tearing porches and stoops from their places. The fact that such depredation could be done between the regular patrols of two officers shows the weakness of the system that is used by the Police Committee. Under the present Police Committee system, it is easy to evade the officers, and parts of the borough are entirely without police protection during the entire night.

SEPTEMBER WEDDING. One of the largest weddings in Bristol for a long while occurred yesterday at eleven o’clock in St. Ann’s Church, when Miss Jennie Petina, daughter of Dominick Petina, became the bride of Louis Galzerano, a prominent undertaker of Philadelphia. A reception was held at the home of the bride’s father, corner of Brook and Cherry Streets, to which five hundred invitations had been issued.

“PLAYING AT THE RIVERSIDE & COLONIAL THEATRES. Saturday Night. 4 Big Acts of Vaudeville and 5 Reels of Best Photo-Plays. 10 cents to all!”

“CLARK’S RESTAURANT, 500 Bath Street..... ..Confectionery, Ice Cream, Cigars, etc., etc. Oysters in season. Public waiting room for trolley patrons.”

### LOCAL INTELLIGENCE:

The Arabian steed driven by Philip Jones, the local mail carrier, became tired on Monday and laid down to rest on the pavement in front of the post office. Assistant Postmaster Wright and some others disentangled him from his harness.



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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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## BCHF Calendar of Events For 2023

**OCTOBER.** Sat., 10/21, 10 AM to 4 PM. 47<sup>th</sup> Historic Bristol Day, featuring house tour & Tea, cruises on the Schooner North Wind, mural arts tour, crafters & vendors, car & antique boat show, entertainment, food court, children's activities, walking tour, archaeological dig, free shuttle service and more, Ticket required for house tour & Tea; schooner reservations at <https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book/north-windsail/items/407978/calendar/2023/10/>

**NOVEMBER.** Wed., 11/15, 7:30 PM. BCHF's annual meeting at BCHF headquarters. Presentation by Mary Ellyn Kunz, Education Coordinator at the Grundy Museum, entitled "The African-American Presence at Pennsbury Manor: Reconstructing Individual Stories." Light refreshment. The public is cordially invited. No fee.

**NOVEMBER.** Tues., 11/21, 7 PM. Presentation by long-term member of the Titanic Historical Society and

respected Titanic historian David Kaplan. Light refreshment. BCHF headquarters. Donation to the FUMC Food Pantry of sanitary products, toilet paper, paper towels, dish or laundry detergent, etc., greatly appreciated. Reservations at 215-788-9408 beginning November 7.

**DECEMBER.** Thurs., 12/7. Bus trip to "The Original Christmas Lights Tour" featuring elaborately-decorated homes in the Dyker Heights, Bay Ridge and Bensonhurst sections of Brooklyn. Full-course dinner at Tommaso's in Brooklyn. \$169 for BCHF members; \$172 for non-members. Call 215-788-7537 for flyer/reservation form.

- BCHF Headquarters are at 321 Cedar Street, Bristol.
- For current information about activities and events, check out our web site at [www.bristolhistory.org](http://www.bristolhistory.org).

Follow us on Instagram - - IG@bristol\_historic\_foundation

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