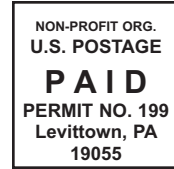




**Bristol Cultural &
Historical Foundation, Inc.**
Post Office Box 215
Bristol, PA 19007

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The Gazette



VOL 35
No. 6

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.

JUNE 2017

Thank You For Your Membership in 2017

As listed in this edition, all members who have paid by this date are listed in this issue. We would also like to thank all those who have paid their dues over the last 50 years. This is our fiftieth anniversary.

Historic Bristol Day 2017 on the third Saturday in October, is being planned as you read this issue. Be sure to reserve that date Saturday, October 21, 2017.

Celebrating 50 Years (1967 - 2017)

BCHF Calendar of Events for 2017

AUGUST Sun., 8/6, 2-4 PM. Annual Peach Social. Angel food cake topped with fresh peaches & ice cream, plus beverage. Takeouts available. Baked goods table. \$5/adult, \$3 under age 12. Benefits BCHF awards to four Bristol High School graduates. BCHF's air-conditioned headquarters.

OCTOBER Wed.-Fri., 10/4-6. 3-day/2-night fully-escorted bus trip to Hudson River Valley, NY. Hudson River cruise, tour of Wilderstein Historic Site, FDR's Hyde Park home, Eleanor Roosevelt's "Val-Kill" cottage, and West Point Military Academy. \$498 pp double; \$630 single; \$200 pp deposit; balance due by Aug. 15. For info call 215 788-9408.

OCTOBER Sat., 10/21, 10 AM - 4 PM. Annual Historic Bristol Day. Private house tours & riverfront Tea. Free entertainment, car show, sailboat regatta, children's activities, food court, exhibits, and more. Ticket required for House Tour & Tea. For details, see www.bristolhistory.org

NOVEMBER Wed., 11/15, 7:30 PM. 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.

NOVEMBER Wed., 11/29. Bus trip to Franklin Inst., Phila., to view "Terracotta Warriors of the First Emperor" exhibit. Visit to Irish Memorial and 3-course lunch included. All-inclusive cost: \$98 for BCHF members; \$100 for non-members. Call 215 781-8591 after April 16 for detailed flyer and 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.

President's Corner

When one thinks of Spring, we think of April Showers and beautiful flowers. This year certainly has been a beautiful Spring. On the more mundane side, some of us think about spring-cleaning and so we did at BCHF. The basement of the 1800's building is an interesting part of the building that most members do not see. The area is divided in half from front to back by a brick wall, which holds the support beams for the building. Apparently, wooden beams did not come in lengths long enough to span the building. Two beams were needed to do the job. The wall in the middle of the area is there where the beams from each side of the building meet. On one side of the wall there is a dirt floor.

The other side has been paved. That is where items have been stored over the years. Along with items that we use for our events, there are many more in long forgotten boxes of items that were needed in the past but no longer have a purpose. Others hold hidden treasures waiting to be rediscovered.

At this writing we are planning a cleanout day in the basement. I can't wait to see what hidden treasures we find. Of course that is on the paved side of the basement. The unpaved side has to wait for a braver president!

Enjoy what is left of this year's Spring. Looking forward to Summer and more activities at BCHF

Jan Ruano



A Note From Ways & Means

Because this is the last GAZETTE issue before the Summer break, I'm highlighting events that are sponsored by the Ways & Means Committee through the Summer. We are a busy group!

Our Spring Tea on April 30th was a great success. A sold out crowd welcomed Spring enthusiastically, many donning flowery bonnets. I must thank the following volunteers who helped with setting up and at the day of the event: Lana Delaney, Geri Cole, Debbi Pinney, Russell Angermann, Janice Rhodes, Sue Ligato, Nonnie & Kitsie Austin, Ceil Graff, Helen Younglove, Carol Mitchener, Sue Watkins, Jan Ruano and Sonja Federaro. Also, a shout out goes to Dave McGlynn who set up all the tables for the tea and I might add - for ALL BCHF programs and events.

I believe you'll agree that the tickets were beautiful this year and were designed by Jan Ruano, our current President. Her talented sister, Ceil Graff, made the decorative candy boxes that were at the place settings. Leeann Reider, the niece of one of our members, baked the delicious scones for the tea. They were a great way to start off our refreshments that day. Local caterer, Darlene Carey, supplied tasty sandwiches and desserts. Jimmy Bason-Fitzpatrick, owner of Bird of Paradise, presented a floral arranging program. This year Jimmy highlighted the how-to's of arranging a bouquet.

BCHF is represented at First Fridays each month through September along Mill Street. Thanks goes to Tony and Marge Russo for getting us started in April. Look for our table by Century Eye. We are featuring Bristol postcards along with a small selection of our other sale items.

Continued on Page 2

THE GAZETTE is a publication of the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation, Inc. - Harold Mitchener, Editor
Post Office Box 215 • Bristol • Pennsylvania • 19007 • 215 781-9895 • www.bristolhistory.org

Articles for this issue of THE GAZETTE were contributed by: Helen Younglove, Carol Mitchener, Jan Ruano, Kathy Barniskis, and Harold Mitchener. Photography by Helen Younglove and Margaret R. Grundy Library historical records.

A Note From Ways & Means . . . continued from page 1

I want to thank Lana Delaney and Helen Younglove for coordinating a successful bus trip to historic Baltimore on May 11th. Please see the back of the GAZETTE for other trip information.

Nothing like Spring cleaning. Many of our BCHF Board and Ways & Means members participated in a cleanout at our headquarters on May 20th. You can imagine what we found in the cellar!

On Friday, June 16th, we will be joining the family-fun night at the Canal Festival at the lagoon. Remember that there will be a decorated floating boat parade, a contest for the best-decorated rubber ducky, music and food vendors. This year the Community Gardens will be open to tour and volunteer gardeners will be on site to answer

questions. Festival time is from 6 - 9 and our own Sue and Bill Watkins will be manning our table.

On **Sunday, June 25th**, we will be represented at the Celtic Festival. Stop by as we will have many of our items for sale. We hope to have the large white oval Bristol magnets that were so popular for sale again. We are introducing a T-shirt, that commemorates our 50th anniversary as an organization. BCHF will be at the festival from 1 - 5 pm.

As always, if you would like to become a member of Ways & Means, please call Kathy Barniskis at 215 943-0258. The last Ways & Means meeting before the Summer break will be on Monday, June 19th at 7PM at the BCHF headquarters on Cedar Street.



Plan to attend our Peach Social on Sunday, August 8 from 2 - 4 pm.

A Friendly Reminder

Since **The Gazette** will be taking its Summer hiatus the next two months, we want to call attention to the fact that, even though the stated reservation deadline for our October 4 - 6 Hudson River Valley trip was August 15 and, for the November 29 trip to the "Terracotta Warriors of the First Emperor" exhibit in Philadelphia, was August 28, reservations have been coming in steadily and these trips may very well be SOLD OUT before those deadlines.

As of this writing, only a few seats remain on the October trip. To check on current availability, contact Helen Younglove at 215 788-9408. Sue Watkins, who is chairing the November bus trip to Philadelphia reports that reservations are coming in on a regular basis. Space availability may be obtained from Sue at 215 781-8591.

Details of both of these trips may be found on the "BCHF Calendar of Events" on the back page of this Gazette.

Historic Baltimore - Thursday, May 11

Unfortunately, Mother Nature disappointed the busload of participants on our recent trip to the historic sites of Baltimore. However, the rain did not dampen their spirits as they embarked on a riding tour of the city, following a 3-course luncheon at Phillips Seafood Restaurant in Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

Photos show the excellent tour guide in the person of Francis Scott Key, who penned the words to our National Anthem; and Fort McHenry which withstood the British bombardment during the War of 1812 and was the basis for "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Photos:
Far Right - Our tour guide dressed as Francis Scott Key

Immediate Right:
Fort McHenry with the US flag flying overhead



Out Of The Past

The following items were excerpted from **JUNE 1937** issues of the BRISTOL COURIER

6/1 - - HUNDREDS WITNESS MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONIES IN BRISTOL BOROUGH. Special exercises were conducted yesterday morning, under the direction of the Robert W. Bracken Post, 382, American Legion. American flags were displayed at practically every residence in the borough and a parade through the streets led to the various burial plots within the borough, with the main exercises being conducted in the Bristol Cemetery.

DELIA GIVEN DECISION OVER BENNY ARIZZI. Vince Delia carried the Purple and Gold colors of the St. Ann's organization to higher heights last night in the amateur boxing show conducted in the St. Ann's arena.

6/2 - - GRAND THEATRE TO PRODUCE LOCAL AND FEATURE FILM. A feature sound picture with all locations laid in the vicinity of Bristol, Croydon and Langhorne, is to be produced by the Grand Theatre. Arrangements are being made with the churches, schools, Boy and Girl Scouts, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Rotary Club, Exchange Club, police and fire departments, historic places, beauty shops and other interesting scenes - all to be taken as part of the picture story, "It Happened in Bristol."

MISS TRACEY'S PUPILS TO PRESENT DANCE RECITAL. The dancing class pupils of Miss Winifred Tracey will present their annual recital in Mutual Aid Hall, Wood Street, tomorrow evening. Five acts are to be included.

6/3 - - NEARLY 100 HORSES ENTERED IN HORSE SHOW HERE. Approximately 100 horses are expected to participate in the Bristol Horse Show which will be held Saturday and Sunday. The show will be held on the Laing Estate and will feature a bareback jumping class.

A&P STORES . . . Iceberg Lettuce - 8¢ lg. head. Bananas - 4 lbs., 19¢. Jersey Asparagus - 23¢ lg. bunch. Bokar Coffee Supreme - two 1-lb. cans - 47¢. Popular Brand Cigarettes - 2 pkgs., 23¢ carton of 10 pkgs., \$1.15. Veal Roast, boneless & rolled - 27¢ lb. Rib Roast Beef - 33¢ lb. Fresh Sea Bass - 10¢ lb."

6/9 - - POLICE TO ARREST NOISY WEDDING PARTIES HERE. Horn blowing days of bridal parties in Bristol are gone and today the Bristol Police Department took drastic action, after being swamped with complaints. Conviction carries a fine of \$10 and costs.

AWARD GRADUATES NUMEROUS GIFTS AT COMMENCEMENT. Betty Beswisk Presented with Grundy Medal, Having a 90.66 Average for Four Years. Seated on the stage of the Grand Theatre, 90 young men and women last night received their diplomas as graduates of Bristol High School. The class was the 54th to be graduated from the school, and 1500 relatives and friends crowded into the theatre to witness the exercises. 6/10 - - ANNOUNCE SCHEDULE FOR UNION CHURCH SERVICES. Five Churches Unite. For the 16th season, Protestant churches of Bristol will join this Summer in union services. The sessions are scheduled each Sunday, starting June 20, at 8 o'clock, with the young people's meetings being held in the same churches as the regular service, but starting at 7 o'clock.

"STRAUS CUT RATE STORE, No. 407 Mill St., near the A&P . . . Waffles and Ice Cream - 20¢. Ice Cream Sodas, 10 Delicious Flavors, with Abbott's DeLuxe -

10¢. Bayer's Aspirin - 10¢. Mavis Dusting Powder - 29¢. Barbasol Shaving Cream - 59¢ jar. Probak Blades - 5¢."

6/14 - - ST. ANN'S GRADUATES 18. Royal Italian Counsel General, Comm. Eduardo Pervano, Presides. The American Legion medals for honor, courage, leadership, service and Americanism were presented to Jennie DiBenedetta and Peter Spezzano.

PICNIC CONDUCTED FOR PUPILS. The 9th grade and a few scholars from the 10th grade, Harriman School, enjoyed a trip to Willow Grove Park by bus on Wednesday.

6/21 - - MISS MARION RICCIO IS WED TO PETER ANTONELLI. Miss Marion Riccio, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Pasquale Riccio, 423 Dorrance Street, and Peter Antonelli, son of John Antonelli, 515 Jefferson Avenue, were united in marriage Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock in St. Ann's Church by the Rev. Marcellino Romagno, rector. The bride wore a gown of white satin of Princess lines, with high standing collar. A reception was held at the home of the bride's parents for the immediate relatives and a few friends. The couple will reside at the home of the bride's parents.

"One Week Only! Oak leather half soles and rubber heels. \$1.50 value - 59¢. For men, women and children. FRANKLIN, 202 Mill Street.

6/22 - - 250 STUDENTS REGISTER AT SUMMER SCHOOL. A total of 250 student registrations and 336 subject registrations were chalked up by today at the Summer School sessions being conducted in Bristol High School. The students are from the public and parochial schools, some local residents who attend Philadelphia schools, and non-residents. Each student is limited to two subjects.

MUSICAL PROGRAM WILL BE PRESENTED TONIGHT. A musical entertainment has been arranged for this evening by students of the Adult Educational and Recreational School, which is sponsored by the Bracken Post, American Legion, under the supervision of the W.P.A. Admission is free.

"Do you know how easy it is to own a PACKARD in Bristol? It costs only a dollar or two more a week to buy a PACKARD SIX than any car in the "low-priced Five." WRIGHT SERVICE GARAGE, Bath and Otter Streets."

6/28 - - "GRAND THEATRE - - Monday and Tuesday. It's Here! The Show the Whole Town Wants to SEE!! Ida Phipps and Edw. Landreth of Bristol and 2,500 Local Persons in Bristol's Own Production, "It Happened in Bristol." Under the able direction of Edwin Cooper, Hollywood Director. See yourself and your friends in the movie!"

6/29 - - AMERICAN LEGION PLANS TO SPONSOR PLAYGROUNDS HERE. The Robert W. Bracken Post, No. 382, American Legion, is sponsoring playgrounds in Bristol this year. Plans are being made to use two or three school yards. The grounds will be open Monday through Friday, both morning and afternoon sessions. All school grounds used will be equipped with sliding boards, see-saws, swings, sand piles, etc. This work will be carried on by leaders of the W.P.A. Education and Recreation program.

'The Greatest Show on Earth' Came to Bristol

With the final shows of the two units of the Ringling Brothers & Barnum & Bailey closing in May, 2017, perhaps some of the readers of *The Gazette* can recall when the circus came to Bristol on June 6, 1956. The Ringling Brothers & Barnum & Bailey Circus arrived at four a.m. for a one day show which was performed in a field of "weeds and high grass" near Delhaas High School. It was noted in the local paper that this may be the last chance for residents of the area to see the circus under the "big top."

Since the start of that season (1956), six circuses had folded or were given into receivership. In the 1930's there were 23 railroad circuses touring the country; their number had steadily dwindled until just one remained in 1956. The reason given for the steady decline of the railroad show trains was mounting costs for operating the "big top" and labor costs for the roustabouts (young men who toured with the circus; they helped to erect the tents. They received a small pay and were given their meals and lodging. They got "glamour and adventure"). But in the 1950's that labor was hard to find. Many circuses turned to the indoors and had eliminated the expenses of trains, tents, light plants, cook tents, etc.

When the circus came to Bristol, the 84 freight cars would unload at the Jefferson Ave. freight yard of the PA railroad. For the one day show, the order of procedure would be first to unload a giant cook tent to take to the site, set it up and begin food preparation. Next was setting up the giant "big top" and materials needed for its erection. A huge parade of 50 elephants and the rest of the animals were formed to parade three miles to the site on Route #413. Seats, 9,000 in all (the largest tent capacity in the world) were set up. Four giant diesel plants were installed with cables which were stretched to all parts of the circus grounds. Finishing touches were added and the two shows (one afternoon, one evening) could begin. When the evening meal was over, the whole operation began in reverse.

The dining tent came down as the final performance started. The side shows were dismantled; the menagerie and front entrance were disassembled as the last people were leaving the exits. Only the "big top" remained standing alone as the last person left. By one a.m. all equipment had left the lot and the train was being loaded at the Bristol siding. By 2 a.m. the entire circus was on its way to its next stop - Ocean Port, NJ.

The Edgely Fire Company made the initial contact with the Ringling Circus. They and the Third District Fire Company operated the parking lot concession. The profit would go to the advancement of the local volunteer fire companies. More than 13,000 residents witnessed the extravaganza. The show lasted for 2 1/2 hours. Spectacular feats of daring included high wire acts, flying trapeze acts, animal acts and, of course, clowns who continually pranced around the three rings.

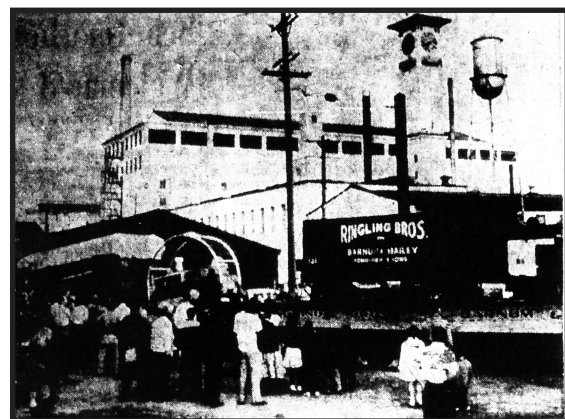
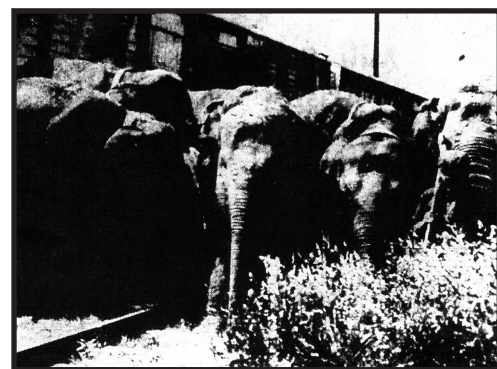
Earlier in the 20th century were circuses that came to Bristol by wagon. It was written in an early article collected by historian Doron Green that the "boys of the town" would wait at the entrance of the cemetery to watch for the circus wagons. In the early 1900's the circus wagons would come by the King's Highway and stop at the Otter Creek Bridge. The elephants were taken down to wade across the creek for fear that the bridge would not support them. The tent wagons were first to arrive. The wagon train stopped on South Otter Street; they would form in line and parade through town to the place where

the tents were to be erected (on a field at Buckley and Pond Streets). The band wagon was drawn by 40 horses driven by one man; this apparently was impressive to the writer of the article. An important part of the show were the clowns. McGinley's Circus and Cole's Circus both made yearly visits to town. It was recalled that one performer could leap over a large number of elephants, camels and horses.

Since Ringling Brothers & Barnum & Bailey Circus announced its ending in May, 2017, a short history of this well-known entertainment is given. Five brothers founded the circus in Baraboo, Wisconsin in 1884; they were sons of German immigrants. The boys did skits and juggling routines and traveled around Wisconsin with their act. They added a trick horse and a bear to their show. The Ringling Brothers met with James Bailey who was a competitor in 1906. When Bailey died, the Ringling Circus and Barnum & Bailey Circus merged in 1919. They traveled by train. Two units (the red and the blue), were formed. In the early 20th century the circus had more than 1200 people (375 performers, 350 property men, 75 cooks and kitchen helpers, etc.). They used more than 650 horses and 40 elephants. Gradually during the 20th century the number of performers and workers were reduced.

In July 1956, the circus ended their season early with president John Ringling North announcing that the circus would no longer exhibit under their own portable "big top" and starting in 1957, they would exhibit in permanent venues such as sports stadiums. Later the Circus was bought by Feld Entertainment with headquarters in Ellenton, FL. Animal activists were constantly protesting elephant treatment. So the elephants were retired in 2016 to a 200 acre sanctuary in Central Florida. With lower attendance and high operating costs, Feld Entertainment announced that the circus would close May, 2017 after 146 years.

The elephants are unloaded and ready to parade to the Circus "big top"



Circus arrives in Bristol at the Jefferson Avenue freight yard

2017 B.C.H.F. Membership

The following individuals, families and businesses have joined the Bristol Cultural and Historical Foundation as members for the year 2017. If your name does not appear below, and you would like to continue to support the work of the Foundation, you may join now using the coupon at the bottom of this page. Additional members will be noted in our September newsletter.

Andrew V. Accardi	Marion S. Flood	Roberta Marino	Mary Ann Smoyer
Jose L. Acevedo	Sonia Foderaro	Rita Marie Mathias	Joyce & Howard Smoyer
Michael Albertson	Barbara Fordham	Donald & Donna McCloskey	Leonard & Danielle Snyder
Donna Albright	Barbara & Ernie Freer	Dave McGlynn	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph J. Stallone
Russell & Pauline Angermann	Pamela Gadsby	Regina McHugh	Alan C. Stoneback
Mary Antonelli	Miss Anna Louise Getz	Mary McIlvain	Jane Sutton
Irene Arhipov	Joseph M. Gilardi	Pauline E. Michalski	Paul & Veronica Swift
Nan Austin	C. Graff	Marilyn L. Milbourne	Marie E. Swistak
Kathleen & Andrew Barniskis	Gene & Barbara Gregory	Harold & Carol Mitchener	Cynthia A. Szedzepanski
Lillian Mitchener Bauserman	Linda M. Griggs	Gloria & Ed Mittleman	Daniel Tenaglia
Debbie Bidlingmaier	Elisabeth Halpert	Fr. Dennis Mooney	Andrew & Joyce Thompson
Samuel W. Black	Tom & Pat Harris	Paul Moore	Elizabeth & Bob Tosti
Dianne Bohrer	Andrea Harvie	Mary Jane & Isadore Morici	Jeannine VanBuren
Kathy Borden	Edward F. & Catherine Hickey	Sheree Napoli	Nancy & Lisa Vasey
Patricia A. Bosco	Jeanine Hillesland	Elaine Nelson	Regina Vasey
Delores Brown	Nancy Hodgkiss	John & Gail Nocito	Ron & Jane Vattimo
Bill and Pat Buchanan	Lorraine Hoffman	Alyssa O'Brien	Alan & Audrey Vogenberg
Robin & Frank Butrey	Beverly Howley	Michael Olszewski	Joan Wagner
Frank & Darlene Carey	Francis & Ellen Hufnell	Dorothy Paglione-Rapp	Gerri Walker
Sarah E. Carter	Dr. Joanne Hullings	Jane Paone	Jesse & Stephanie Walker
Grace Carter	Mr. & Mrs. James B. Humphreys	Phyllis Pavone	Marion M. Walter
Dawn Casmirri	Nancy Jenca	Mary Petrone	William & Susan Watkins
Bill & Rose Cattani	Donna Jenkinson	Deborah F. Pinney	Barbara Weir
Anthony & Lois Centafont	Lynda Johnson	Arnold Porter	Margaret R. Wentz
J. Cianciosi	Michele Jones	Philomena Quattrocchi	Pauline White
Ann & Nelson Clements	Diane Jones-Davidson	Johanna Raines	Karen D. Wilson
Geraldine & Dr. Frances Cole	Mary & Jody Kehoe	Angelo & Melinda Ratini	Helen Younglove
Joan Cordek	Clarence King	Helen B. Raymond	
Alice & Vincent Cordisco	Tom & Diane King Sr.	Janice Rhodes	
Anthony Costantini	Rosemarie Kirby	Nancy Riccio	
Dorothy Cusano	Ralph & Jo Lalli	Nicholas A. Rizzo	
Joseph & Jeanne D'Emidio	Barbara Anne LaRosa	John & Mary Anne Roche	
Phyllis Debnarik	Joe & Anna Larrisey	Linda Rowan	
Ellanna L. Delaney	Jane B. Larzelere	Jan Ruano	
Beth Delaney	Maryann Lautt	Keith Russell	
Joanne Delia	Suzanne J. Ligato	Anthony & Margaret Russo	
Ginny DiMaggio	Eva Ligato	Ralph & Joyce Sabatini	
Dr. & Mrs. Dominick DiNunzio	Marie Litvinas	Kathryn Saldan	
Helen Dmytryk	Bob & Carol Long	Charles & Dolores Sampsel	
Bob & Nancy Doyle	Ms. Jean K. Lowden	Yvonne P. Sampsel	
Grace & Tony Duva	Maryann Lucenti	Gloria L. Seacrist	
Mary Ann Ennis	Murtle C. Lynahan	Catherine M. Severi	
Anthony & Irene Esposito	Margaret Lynn	Deb Shields	
Wm. & Pat Esposito	Joe Mancini	Sean Smith	
Fidel Esposito	Mary Jane Mannherz	Clara & Karen Smith	

Business & Community Members

Bertucci Maren Associates
Bristol Fire Company
Ellen's Travel, Inc.
Fidelity Savings & Loan Assoc. of Bucks County
The Grundy Foundation
Harris Comfort
Mothers & Others
St. Mark Catholic Church
White Monument Co.

2017 Membership Form

2017 Membership Dues: _____ Individual \$12.00 _____ Family \$24.00 _____ Business \$50.00

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

Burlington Island

One of the finest summer playgrounds on the Delaware River between Wilmington, Delaware and Trenton, New Jersey was Burlington Island, New Jersey. Steamboats traveled the river from Wilmington to Trenton filled with people who wanted to have fun in summer near or in the water of the river.

For people living in Bristol or Burlington, the ferry boat "William Doran" was the way to arrive on the island. In the early part of the 20th century, it was a great place to hold picnics especially by church or other organizations. About 1917, amusement rides were installed and the number of people using the island really increased. What would visitors avail themselves of on the island?

Sand from the northern part of the island was transported via barge to the area opposite Bristol for a bathing beach. A bath house was installed on the island. Since the river was used by steamboats and other larger vessels, they created a wake when passing and it was advertised that it was similar to "ocean waves". In 1921, music was furnished by the "Six Bohemians Nightingales" band.

There was a dancing pavilion and restaurant. These were managed by C. Frank Donnally. the dance pavilion was illuminated. Art work costing \$30,000 was done to make it look like an arctic voyage with an ice bound coast. A generator was installed on the island to provide the electricity. Dances were held each Wednesday and Saturday evenings. Smaller boats were used to transport people for this and those boats had curtains installed if the weather were inclement.

The use of canoes was very popular and people, especially from Burlington and Bristol, could use the canoe. Both Burlington and Bristol had "canoe clubs".

There were picnic tables under the trees and people would bring baskets of food. There were also small concession stands selling foods and cold non-alcoholic beverages.

There were swings and see-saws for the smaller children. There was a baseball diamond too.

For people wanting to pitch a tent, at a rental fee, that could also be possible and was available for more than one day.

In 1921, 3000 feet of track was installed on a scenic railway. There was a tunnel-of-love also as a nice covered ride. There was a merry-go-round which was very popular for all ages. When the park burned in 1934, the carousel was the only ride that did not burn. That was taken apart and transported to Seaside Heights, NJ. It still operates for visitors. This writer has personally watched that carousel at Seaside Heights. Fortunately it was not destroyed by recent storms along the NJ coast.

The park was 50 acres and Robert Merkle was the island manager. The School District of Burlington, NJ, receives the major portion of profits from the island to use for education. This was one of the original rules of the island. This writer remembers going in a small boat with an outboard motor with the Boy Scout group from Troop 25 from Bristol to the island in the 1950s. The leader of that troop was Phil Stout. The troop met in St. James Church parish house on Walnut Street. The cost for that ride was 5 cents.

The rides were gone but someone sold sodas and snacks. The island was there to be explored too.

At one time in the early 20th century there was a farm on the island. When the fire in 1934 occurred those people lost their barn and some of the animals perished.

Some people looking at the island may remember seeing small cottages on the island in the 1960s. They were declared unsanitary for use and the manager of the island from New Jersey told the people they would have to cease their use. The small cottages were removed.

What is on the island presently? There is no human activity. All kinds of birds, even the American eagle, can be seen. There have even been reports of deer on the island. Several have been able to swim to Bristol.

At the end of the island toward the Burlington-Bristol Bridge, a lake was dredged for the sand and transported away. The opening for the barges was closed. This was during the 1950s when Warner Sand and Gravel Company of Morrisville was in operation.

In 2017, for the people from both sides of the river, it is a lovely tree-filled island to observe. Perhaps it is like what the original Native Americans saw when they were in the Bristol and Burlington areas.

Connecting Bristol and Burlington, NJ

In May of 1931, the bridge from Burlington to Bristol opened for traffic. This was reported in the "Bristol Courier" newspaper.

On August 19, 1921 the newspaper called the "observer" reported that a "Pontoon Bridge" was going to be built and that they would model it for the same kind of pontoon bridge on the Hudson River in New York State connecting Younker and Albany and that it would be much less expensive than the heavy metal bridges that span many rivers. They would be using old retired wooden ships. They would like these on both sides of the river and that a space in the middle would have a draw bridge so that ships in the river could pass.

BCHF'S 22nd Annual Tea

It was, indeed, a "Lovely Spring Tea" for the sixty members and friends of BCHF who filled our headquarters on Sunday afternoon, April 30.

Attendees enjoyed traditional Tea fare of hot tea, scones, and a variety of tea sandwiches and desserts



Each table and windowsill was decorated in keeping with the Spring theme.



Jimmy Bason, proprietor of "Bird of Paradise Flowers", 231 Mill Street, Bristol, entertained with a floral arranging presentation.



Smiles of delight from several of the attendees.

Raffle tickets were sold on this basket of assorted treats, including two tickets to the Bristol Riverside Theatre's final show of the season.



Thanks to Kathy Barniskis and her dedicated Ways & Means Committee for planning and executing this successful event!

TURN SIGNALS

Some of the readers of this article may remember having to wind down a car window for the driver of a car to give a hand signal out the window indicating a "right" or "left" turn. Do you remember doing that on a winter day or a day when it was raining? Fortunately that kind of activity is now only used by people on bicycles.

The turn signals in cars were invented by Oscar J. Simler (1887 - 1968) in Ohio. He invented and received a patent for the turn signals now used in cars in 1929.

Buick was the first auto maker to install them. Other auto makers eventually followed. It was not available for consumers until 1939. Not all cars had them until the late 1940s.

In the early 1950s drivers still had to learn them for a driver's test. With the higher speeds and roads like turnpikes and expressways now used throughout the nation, it is fortunate for drivers that Oscar Simler was able to invent the turn signals now installed in all automobiles.