



GIVING OUR  
PAST A FUTURE

## Township Trivia

- Name that building!* After a destructive fire in 1917, this building was built using the standing walls and bricks from an abandoned building owned by the Cole Brothers Circus.
- Who am I?* More than 100 years ago I started the myth that Harborcreek was once named Millcreek, and Millcreek was once named Harborcreek.
- Name that decade!* The underpass, or “subway,” that motorists traveling Route 20 use to either enter or exit Harborcreek Village was built in what decade?
- Where was this?* In 1916, the first fair was held on the 85-acre fairgrounds. The grounds featured an exhibition hall, a 3,000-seat grandstand, a half mile track, and at least 10 barns and stables.

### ANSWERS:

1. In the Village of Harborcreek at 6724 Buffalo Road, the First Presbyterian Church was rebuilt after the fire in 1917, first built at this location in 1871. This is the second location (and second fire) after the original church which was located further east across the street was destroyed by fire.

2. In 1903, an historian named John Miller wrote *“The History of Erie County”* and speculated that it was a “map maker’s mistake” since Harborcreek should have been named Millcreek and Millcreek named Harborcreek. There are no concrete facts to support that.

In fact, when Harborcreek was established in 1803, there were few mills built in Harborcreek. The 1820 population was only 555. In Millcreek, the first mill was built in 1796 at the mouth of the stream naming it Mill Creek – as it is still named. By 1835, there were no less than 17 gristmills and sawmills along Mill Creek. The 1820 Millcreek population was 1,017.

3. Before 1921, travelers drove over the tracks just west of the village at a point where Videtto Road, now known as Depot Road, crossed the tracks. There was the Nickel Plate, the New York Central, the East Erie Commercial and the Buffalo and Lake Erie Traction Line (Trolley Line); all of these tracks and not one automatic gate for the protection of the motorist. The only warnings were the old **“STOP- LOOK- AND- LISTEN”** signs. After many accidents, they began excavating under the tracks east of the crossing. The Subway (or Underpass as is commonly called) was completed in 1921. It was part of a beautification project for the Township Bicentennial in 2003 for many to enjoy the pleasant gardens and wood carvings.

4. Fair Avenue, of course. The section between Fair Avenue and Walbridge, north of Iroquois Avenue was the Fairgrounds. The first fair was held September 18-23, 1916. When the grandstand burned in 1922, the Andrews Land Company began subdividing the fairground into “farm lots.” They sold for \$300 each and included lake front privileges through an area now the site of Fairfield Hose Company.