



## Harborcreek Historical Society

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday &  
Saturday 10 am – 2 pm, Thursday 4 – 7 pm



*Dedication of the Gifford-Blanchfield House, July 15, 2017. Photograph courtesy of John D. Fox Photography.*

*Before you throw the envelope away... place your thumb over the Eclipse stamp. The heat from your thumb will make the moon appear.*

# THE HARBOR VIEW

*The Future of Our Past is in Your Hands*



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### Board of Directors

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John Skuce, Treasurer  
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Bill Rodland  
Louise Smerick  
Brenda Weaver

## Gifford-Blanchfield House Dedication

On Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup> nearly two hundred people attended the formal dedication and open house of the newly reconstructed Gifford-Blanchfield House. Here's what we remember about the event.



Lori Sheridan, president of the Harborcreek Historical Society, began the event by welcoming visitors and thanking all who contributed to the project. She included the following remarks in her welcome at the dedication, "My memories of Rick (Blanchfield) center on his love for and pride in his family's long roots in Harborcreek."

Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper presented Harborcreek Township and the Society a citation acknowledging the preservation of the Gifford-Blanchfield House and the Blanchfield family history. She's pictured here with Judy Wieczorek, a founding member and early president of the Society, and current treasurer John Skuce.



*(Continued on Page 5)*



## Light Up Harborcreek

December 8, 2017 6:00-8:00 pm  
Harborcreek Township Municipal Grounds  
5601 Buffalo Road

# Gifts to the Society

**Deckle Girls Scrapbooking**  
**Susan Frost Hayes-Masa**  
**Judy Wieczorek**  
**John & Brenda Weaver**  
**Larry Beard**

**In appreciation for a presentation given by John Skuce  
In memory of her grandparents Ed and Anna Maryan  
In celebration of the newly opened Gifford-Blanchfield House  
In celebration of the newly opened Gifford-Blanchfield House  
In celebration of the newly opened Gifford-Blanchfield House**

**Thank you to those who have given extra with membership renewals and/or through the donation box!**

The Society began the Memorial Gifts program a decade ago, and many members have given to the organization in recognition of a loved one, a classmate or a family celebration. We invite you to consider making a donation "In Memory," "In Honor" or "On the Occasion" of a person or event that is important to you.

## Veterans Tribute: Purple Heart Highway by Sherri Towell



Have you ever noticed this sign while traveling on Route 5?

The Purple Heart Trail (Highway) was established in 1992 by the Military Order of the Purple Heart to create a symbolic and honorary system of roads, highways, bridges, and other monuments that give tribute to the men and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart medal. There are trails in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Guam. The Purple Heart Highway in Erie County starts in North East and extends through Erie. It stretches 44.85 miles along Route 5/Lake Road.

So, as you travel along Route 5 and enjoy the beautiful lake views, think about the sacrifices our brave military men and women made defending our freedom, and say, "Thank you!"

Visit <http://www.purpleheart.org/PHTrail/> to access an interactive map of the entire trail network.

## Thank you for your generosity on Erie Gives Day!

On August 8<sup>th</sup>, 19 donors gave to the Harborcreek Historical Society during the Erie Community Foundation's 2017 Erie Gives Day, and the total amount raised by the Society through this annual community fundraising campaign was \$1,374. **Thank you!**

Erie Gives is a 12-hour period of online giving where the Erie Community Foundation matches a percentage of each donation made. In this one day, \$4.4M was raised for area nonprofits. To see the full list of participating nonprofits and donation totals, visit [www.eriegives.org](http://www.eriegives.org).

### 2017 Erie Gives Day Donors

Barbara Anderson  
Anonymous  
Sarah & Bill DePlatchett  
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Tracy & Eric Moore

Chuck & Patti Myers  
Carolyn Ruth  
Lori Sheridan  
Beth Simmons  
John & Judy Skuce  
Rick & Louise Smerick  
Cam Stadtmueller  
Carlene Stroup

Mary E. McConnell Watson  
John & Brenda Weaver  
Judith Wieczorek



**Erie Gives check presentation Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at the Erie Zoo. From left to right: Dionne Wallace Oakley (ECF Board Member), Melinda Meyer, Louise Smerick, Judy Skuce, John Skuce and Michael Batchelor (ECF President). Photograph courtesy of R. Frank Photography.**

## Business Spotlight by Cam Stadtmueller



### My Daddy's Barber Shop

Looking for a skilled barber? Dick and Tom can meet your needs with over 41 years of experience. These two friends joined together to establish their barber shop in Lawrence Park next to the dinor on Main Street. The shop is open Tuesday through Saturday from 8 am to 5 pm. Walk-ins are welcome. For more information, contact the shop at (814) 899-6471.

They have been a Business Sponsor with the Harborcreek Historical Society since 2003.

### My Dad's Pizza & Deli

This family-owned and operated business has been satisfying customers with specialty pizzas, chicken wings, calzones, salads and submarine sandwiches made fresh to order since 1993. The restaurant is conveniently located on Buffalo Road near Cook Avenue, and offers home delivery between 5:00 pm and 10:20 pm. Contact (814) 899-7511 to place an order.

My Dad's Pizza & Deli has been a Business Sponsor since 2011.



### Rabbit's Hat Antiques

Katherine Carlson and Kristine Nelson created this business out of their love of collecting antiques. As collectors, they found that there was a need for someone to assist individuals with downsizing and estate liquidations, and they began conducting moving, downsizing and estate sales in the late 1990s. Today, the services Rabbit's Hat Antiques offers includes consultations, appraisals, estate liquidation and garage sale set up. Kathi and Kris can be reached at (814) 899-1414, or you can find more information about their business at [www.rabittshatantiques.com](http://www.rabittshatantiques.com).



### Gospel Hill Garden Club Beautifies the Gifford-Blanchfield House by Cam Stadtmueller

The Harborcreek Historical Society is grateful to the Gospel Hill Garden Club for donating and planting a garden area near the entrance to the Gifford-Blanchfield House. Native and heirloom perennials were planted. They are plants and clippings from members' own gardens. In honor of Arbor Day, the Club planted a purple lilac bush and a white dogwood tree, too.

Special recognition goes to club members Wendy Essigmann, Ruth Shindlecker, Sallie Barnes, Sue Pence, Mary Hetrick, Jane Hume, Carolyn Bock and Gretchen Tinsley.

#### New Members

Ann Edwards, Harborcreek  
Nancy Cranston Fair, Harborcreek  
Carol Ann Miller, Mesa, AZ  
Andrew Pierce, Harborcreek  
David Kempa, Evergreen, CO  
Edward Schwindt, Saegertown  
Andy Krahe, Harborcreek

#### Office Hours

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, Wednesday & Saturday 10 am – 2 pm;  
Thursday 4 – 7 pm  
Please call or email to schedule an appointment with our volunteers. Research inquiries welcome.



**Office Telephone:** 814.899.4447  
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**Website:** [www.harborcreekhistory.org](http://www.harborcreekhistory.org)

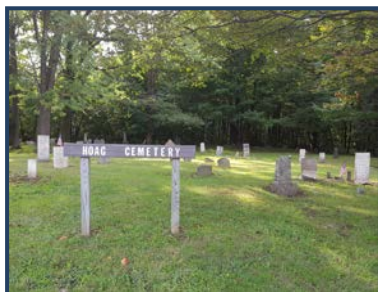
## Connecting to Harbor Creek School District Faculty by Cam Stadtmueller

Three members of our Society took part in the district's in-service day on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The goal of the program was to help teachers integrate local history into their curriculum and encourage them to visit the Gifford-Blanchfield House with their students. Any research, photographs, and family histories generated from classroom lessons can be added to the Society's archives.



Brenda Weaver spoke about the Society's archives and how to conduct genealogical research. Nancy Brown and Cam Stadtmueller shared historic photographs. Every teacher that participated in the presentation received copies of walking and driving tours of Harborcreek, a copy of the 1867 map of Harborcreek Township, and a "Did you know?" fact sheet.

## Hoag Cemetery Restoration by Cam Stadtmueller



Under the supervision of Robin Cuneo, volunteers began cleaning and resetting gravestones at Hoag Cemetery on Depot Road on Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup>. The project is a collaboration of First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek, Harborcreek Historical Society, and Harborcreek Township, and work will continue into September. To volunteer, contact Judy Ellwood at (814) 899-1031.

Hoag, also known as Backus Cemetery, was founded in 1811 and has around 140 graves. A list of Hoag Cemetery burials was donated to the Society's archives by Denny Cass and is available to researchers during office hours.

### HARBORCREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Knowledge Park, 5451 Merwin Lane, Erie, PA • 814.899.4447 • harborcreekhistory@gmail.com

#### PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

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STAN'S GARDEN CENTER	899-5424	5001 BUFFALO ROAD

Your business could be listed here as a sponsor. Please contact us to learn more.

\*Businesses which have been a Society sponsor for ten years or more.

## Gifford-Blanchfield House Dedication *(Continued from Page 1)*



Many attendees knew Bette Blanchfield from the years she and her late husband, former Township Supervisor Gerald "Jerry," lived in Harborcreek. Bette spoke with heartfelt emotion about how the property becoming a home for the historical society was their son Rick's vision. His unexpected death at the age of 56 resulted in his family and Harborcreek Township Supervisors coming together to discuss how Rick's wishes should be fulfilled. The day chosen for the dedication of the Gifford-Blanchfield House, July 15th, would have been Rick's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday.



Vicki Lee Blanchfield Smith joined her mother, Bette, for the dedication ceremony. Together, they have created the Gifford-Blanchfield family collection, which is housed in the archives of the Society.



Bette and Vicki unveiled the prototype of a sign that presents the history of the house from the first occupants, Gershom and Lucy Lewis Gifford, to Rick Blanchfield. When finished, the sign will be installed in the garden near the rear entrance of the house. Displays inside the house feature items donated by the Blanchfield family to the Society.



Jon Scott Russell, a relative of the Blanchfield family, drove from Illinois to Erie in his antique car to attend the dedication ceremony.



The Gifford-Blanchfield House was open all day for tours. The exhibits inside the house were viewed by approximately 200 people on the day of the dedication. These displays, as well as other exhibits about Harborcreek, will remain available to visitors for several months.



The family brought with them to the dedication a collection of photographs of the Russell Log Cabin Restaurant, dance hall, and tourist cabins, which were once located where the Harborcreek Municipal Building sits today. The cobblestone fireplace that is located between the municipal building and Buffalo Road is the only piece of the Russell Log Cabin Restaurant that exists today. The Blanchfield family took the opportunity to pose for photographs in front of it at the event. Pictured here is Marti Russell Smith Bunnell and her husband John. John proposed marriage to Marti at the fireplace. They are holding a photograph which captured that moment many years ago.

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## Gifford-Blanchfield House Dedication *(Continued from Page 5)*



The old Blanchfield fruit stand is being leased and operated by Burch Farms. When the family walked over to the fruit stand, Bette recalled that some customers knew her only as the "fruit stand lady." Here is a "play" photograph of Bette selling peaches.



John Proctor, one of Rick's closet friends, talked about his love of classic cars. John, who grew up on Station Road, met Rick when they entered Harbor Creek Junior High.



Following Rick's death, John helped the family sell his collection of cars to owners who shared the same enthusiasm for classic cars as Rick. During the dedication ceremony, John talked about how 26 classic cars are now in the possession of collectors along the East Coast. The 1939 DeSoto, which was owned by Jerry and Rick, has been resold to a new owner in Switzerland. John spent the last three years restoring Rick's Superbird, and he plans to exhibit it at car shows around the country. Four of Rick's cars that are locally owned were on display in the parking lot of the Gifford-Blanchfield House during the dedication event.



*A special "thank you" to John D. Fox Photography for capturing the dedication and opening of the Gifford-Blanchfield House on July 15, 2017. We greatly appreciate this service to the Harborcreek Historical Society.*

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## Find the Society at Representative Sonney's Senior Expo

Representative Curt Sonney's annual Senior Expo in Harborcreek is scheduled for Friday, September 1st from 10 a.m. to noon at the Harborcreek Fire Department Social Hall, 7275 Buffalo Road. Dozens of vendors representing various state agencies, local governments, businesses, health care organizations and nonprofits will be on-hand to provide information and answer questions important to seniors. Flu shots will be administered during the expo. Seniors wanting to receive a vaccination are asked to bring their insurance cards. Free hot dogs and hamburgers will also be available courtesy of LIFE-NWPA. The expo is free to attend and no reservations are needed.



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## Seeking Guest Writers

Would you like to share your historical interest or family lore about Harborcreek Township with the readers of *The Harbor View*? We welcome submissions from guest writers for each issue. They are usually one page in length and may contain photographs or other graphics. Please contact the Society via email at [harborcreekhistory@gmail.com](mailto:harborcreekhistory@gmail.com) or call (814) 899-4447 if you have a story you'd like to see printed. We look forward to hearing from you.