



Harborcreek Historical Society

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



Zachary Wright of Boy Scout Troop 175, a charter organization of Faith Lutheran Church, fulfilled his Eagle Scout requirements by constructing two wooden picnic tables for the grounds of the Gifford-Blanchfield House. Beautiful work, Mr. Wright!

THE HARBOR VIEW

The Future of Our Past is in Your Hands



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Society celebrates township's ethnic heritage with new exhibits

By Brenda Weaver

The Harborcreek Historical Society will host a series of displays throughout the year that will honor immigrants who settled in Harborcreek Township. The current display, which is located in the Gifford-Blanchfield House, features immigrants from Ireland and Italy, and the celebrations of St Patrick's Day and Valentine's Day. It also includes census records, death certificates, and biographies for immigrants who lived in the Township.

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Annual meeting highlights restoration of Hoag Cemetery

On January 20th, a group of 40 members and friends attended the Harborcreek Historical Society's annual meeting. The guest speaker was Robin Cuneo, pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek and project coordinator for the clean-up and restoration work at Hoag Cemetery, one of Harborcreek Township's oldest cemeteries.

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Board of Directors

Lori Sheridan, President
Melinda Meyer, Vice President
John Skuce, Treasurer
Jane Ingold, Secretary
Nancy Brown
Tracy Longnecker Moore
Bill Rodland
Louise Smerick
Brenda Weaver



Hoag Cemetery, also known as Backus Cemetery, is more than 200 years old. Robin Cuneo and Judy Ellwood of First Presbyterian Church, Girl Scouts Troop 0300, and Nancy Brown of the Harborcreek Historical Society worked to restore the cemetery last fall.

Gifts to the Society

East Erie Moose Family Center
Brenda Weaver
John Stetson, Jr.
Neil Evans
David & Andrea Maille
Joy Anderson

In Support of our Society
In Support of our Society
In Memory of James Sheridan
In Memory of Helen (Long) & Kenneth Evans
In Memory of Joe Bruce
In memory of Bruce & Antonio (cats) and Woody (dog)

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.

Society celebrates Township's ethnic heritage (Continued from Page 1)

Census records have been very useful in creating the first of five ethnic-themed exhibits. The first United States Census that included the category "birthplace" was the 1850 census, and the last census released by the National Archives is the 1940 census. The following lists were created using census records from 1850 to 1940. The lists indicate the number of individuals born in Ireland and Italy residing in Harborcreek Township in a given census year.

Birthplace: Ireland	Birthplace: Italy
1850 – 65	1910 – 35 (plus 3 families)
1860 – 79	1920 – 17
1879 – 76	1930 – 18
1880 – 82	1940 – 33
1900 – 27	
1910 – 10	
1920 – 6	
1930 – 2	
1940 – 7	



These totals include only those individuals born in Ireland and Italy; they do not include children who were born in the United States. Surnames do not always match nationalities, because women of Irish or Italian descent who married men of other nationalities would assume their surnames.

In 1910, there were 35 individuals born in Italy who were all listed on the same page of the census. They all worked for the LS & MS Railroads, and the location was incorrectly transcribed as Horbeck Station. Records indicated that, "All inhabitants of box cars on Lake Shore Rail Road Siding at Harbor Creek Station."

Future displays will focus on Eastern European immigrants (Austria, Bohemia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia), British immigrants (England, Scotland, and Wales), immigrants from Western Europe (Germany, France, Netherlands, and Switzerland), and immigrants from Scandinavia (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden).

New book features vignettes about historic North East

The North East Historical Society is pleased to announce the recent publishing of *Historic Vignettes of North East, PA* by society volunteer Dick Tefft. The 193-page book includes more than 80 stories and 160 photographs and illustrations. It highlights people from North East who "made it big," the history of the Underground Railroad in North East, and previously untold history and stories of the town's most treasured places and its people. Books are available to purchase for \$25 each through the North East Historical Society. Email northeasthistoricalsociety@yahoo.com or call (814) 403-8709.

Business Spotlight by Cam Stadtmueller



Are you looking for a plaque, trophy, medals, engraved labels or awards for business or a personal use? Engraved Imaging provides fast service at a reasonable price. There are a wide variety of sizes, colors and styles for your selection. Images can be engraved, lasered or sublimated on wood, metal, plastic, leather or glass. Be creative! Bring them your idea. (www.engravedimaging.us, 4535 Buffalo Road, (814) 897-7807)



Fast approaching is the season for weddings, graduations, family reunions, large picnics and small gatherings. While planning, stop in and look at this Buffalo Road business, which offers a wide variety of rental items. There are party and wedding supplies like tables, chairs, tents with or without sides, food service ware and decorative items for your occasion. Items can be delivered and set up at your location. (www.grandrental.com, 5045 Buffalo Road, (814) 899-3998)

Harborcreek's Highflying Hero by Cam Stadtmueller

If you hear someone say the name Paul J. Weitz, you will immediately hear another person say, "Astronaut." Paul was an inspired young man who grew up in Harborcreek in the 1930's and 1940's. He grew up to become one of a select group of Americans to train with the United States Space Program and achieve the title of Astronaut.

This is the first in a series of articles that will look back at the life of Paul J. Weitz. This issue contains the highlights of his aeronautical career, and our next issue will have the human interest side of his life, and include his wife, Suzanne Berry Weitz.

Do you have a favorite memory of Paul or Suzanne? Were you classmates in elementary or high school? Were you in attendance at events in our community honoring Paul? We would love for you to share your favorite memories with us so that they can be included in this look back at this Harborcreek celebrity. Please contact us at harborcreekhistory@gmail.com or (814) 899-4447.

Astronaut Paul J. Weitz

Education: Paul graduated from Harbor Creek High School in the Class of 1949. He then went on to attend Penn State University, earning a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical Engineering in 1954. Ten years later, he secured a Master of Science in Aeronautical Engineering from the United States Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Flight Experience / Command Positions: In 1954, Paul was commissioned as Ensign with the Pennsylvania State University Naval Reserve Officers Training Corp. He served aboard a naval destroyer the following year, and was awarded his Aviation Wings after completing Flight Training at Jacksonville, Florida in 1956. He served in Vietnam and logged 6,400 hours of flight time with a jet aircraft as a Naval Aircraft Squadron member.

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Office Hours

New Members
Roger Pierce, Harborcreek
Louise Pierce Martin, Fairview

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.



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Harborcreek's Highflying Hero *(Continued from Page 3)*



Paul was selected to join Group 5 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and was one of 19 men chosen to train at Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas in 1966. He served as Pilot on the crew of Skylab 2 (SL-2), which launched on May 25 and splashed down on June 22, 1973. SL-2 was the first manned Skylab mission. The mission lasted for 28-days, a record at the time. Paul and his two crewmates, Pete Conrad and Joseph P. Kerwin, performed extensive and unprecedented repairs to serious damage the unmanned Skylab sustained during its launch, salvaging the entire Skylab mission. He logged two hours and 11 minutes of EVA during the mission.

Paul retired from NASA in 1976, and returned to U.S. Navy as a test pilot. In 1983, at age 50, he returned to NASA to fly the maiden spaceflight of *Challenger*.

Paul was spacecraft commander on the crew of STS-6, which launched from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on April 4, 1983. This was the maiden voyage of the orbiter *Challenger*. During the mission, the crew conducted numerous experiments in materials processing, recorded lightning activities, deployed IUS/TDRS-A, conducted extravehicular activity while testing a variety of support systems and equipment in preparation for future space walks, and also carried three Getaway Specials. Mission duration was 120 hours before *Challenger* landed on a concrete runway at Edwards Air Force Base, California, on April 9, 1983. With the completion of this flight, he logged a total of 793 hours in space.

Paul was Deputy Director of the Johnson Space Center when he retired from NASA in May 1994.

Sources: www.jsc.nasa.gov www.nytimes.com/obituaries
www.washingtonpost.com/obituaries www.wikipedia.org

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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.**

Veterans Tribute: A Soldier's Heart by Sherri Towell

The heart is celebrated during the month of February. February is National Heart Health Month, National Repair a Broken Heart Month and of course, we have Valentine's Day, which involves everybody's heart. One heart that needs to be mentioned is "A Soldier's Heart."

During the American Civil War, a physician by the name of Jacob Mendes DaCosta noticed a number of soldiers exhibiting physical symptoms primarily cardiac in nature; rapid heart rate, heart palpitations, chest pain. He thought that the cause was due to prolonged episodes of diarrhea. The ailment was called DaCosta's Syndrome – irritable and exhausted "soldier's heart".

During World War I, soldiers started exhibiting the same symptoms. It was also noted that the victims exhibited sweating, muscle tension, tremors, GI discomfort and nightmares. The consulting physicians decided that all the shells exploding around them were the causes. Thus, came the term "shell shock". In 1915, the condition was recognized as wartime psychic trauma, not a physical one.

World War II brought new victims. Numerous terms were used for the condition: battle fatigue, combat neurosis, and combat exhaustion. The number of cases was so significant that the Surgeon General added a new branch of physician specialist to the medical and surgical team – neuropsychiatry.

Interest in the condition was lost in the medical community after World War II. Once the Vietnam Conflict came to be, there was renewed interest. At that time, it was referred to as Post Vietnam Syndrome. After psychologist Nancy Andreasen became involved in the study of this psychological condition, she termed it Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is what 'soldier's heart' is known by today. After over 100 years, PTSD is recognized as a true psychological disease caused by a traumatic event.

If you conduct a Google search for things celebrated during the month of February, you'll find an extensive list. We ask that you remember "A Soldier's Heart," and support those who suffer from this ailment.

Genealogy Society launches new website

The Erie Society for Genealogical Research (ESGR), which has an office in the Hagen History Center, 356 West Sixth Street, has launched a new website at <https://genealogyerie.org/> If you don't know the organization, you should. ESGR conducts beginning genealogy workshops, field trips, cemetery readings, and research for out-of-town requests. Membership meetings feature guest speakers and are the second Tuesday of every month, except January. The newsletter, Keystone Kuzzins, is published quarterly. You can contact ESGR at info@genealogyerie.org.

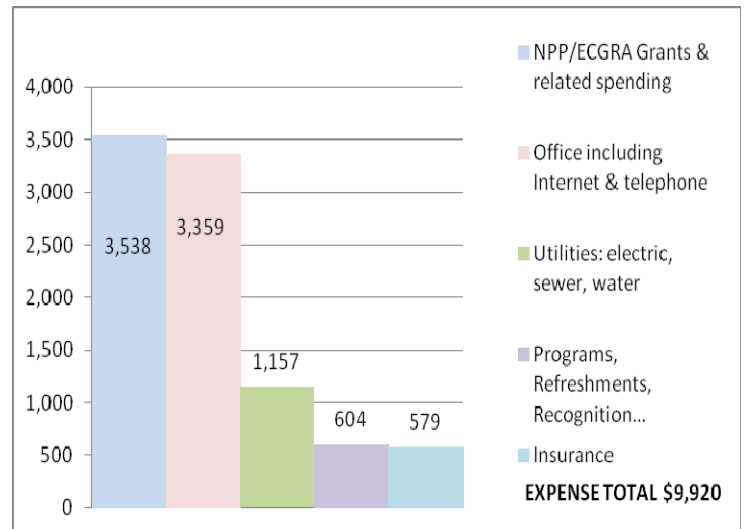
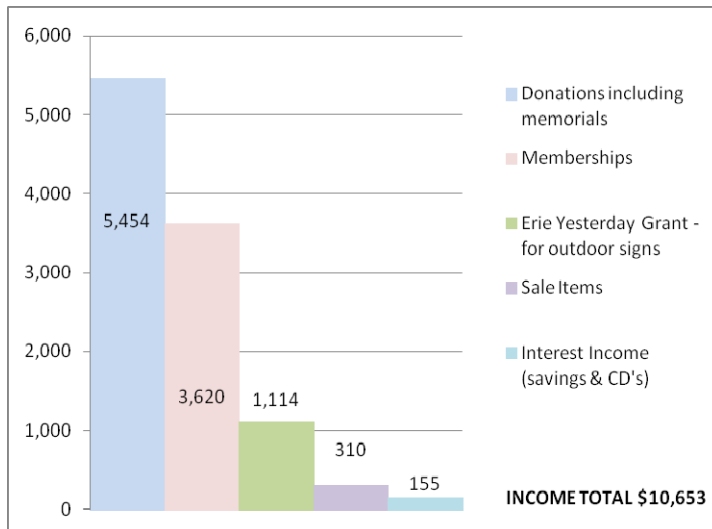
Select additions to the Society's permanent collections by Lori Sheridan

The following items were donated to the Harborcreek Historical Society in 2017. The Society is grateful to the donors, and has already added the items to its permanent collections!

- *Sugar'n Time*, watercolor painting by Harborcreek artist Joan Barlow Harborcreek, donated by Carlene Stroup
- Joseph Sr., Joseph Jr., & Myron Backus Wills & Estates, donated by Dennis Cass
- Backus Families of Harborcreek Descended from Joseph Sr. & Olive (Parks) Backus, compiled by Perry M. Smith & Dennis G. Cass, donated by Dennis Cass
- Fairfield on the Lake, poster, and Parkside Survey Map, donated by Brad Weber
- Hoag Cemetery, map and list of internments, donated by Bill Nesgoda
- Tuttle School, photographs, donated by Diane Etzel
- Ceramic Astronaut, made by Beth Musgrove Seifert, item was the centerpiece for a dinner honoring Paul Weitz in 1973, signed by Paul Weitz, donated by Eleanor Learn
- 1865 Erie County Atlas, and large brass apple butter kettle, donated by Beth Simmons
- "The Harbor" menu, and Stuckey's Restaurant postcard, donated by Brenda Weaver
- Plaque, 1967 World Champion Horseshoe Pitcher Dan Kuchcinski, donated by Harbor Creek School District

Annual meeting *(Continued from Page 1)*

The annual meeting also included a year-end financial report by Treasurer John Skuce. The Society's assets total was \$27,458.86. The income for the year was \$10,862.94, and the expense total was \$10,130.25. The net income for 2017 was \$732.69. A special report was given about membership in 2017. The total income for memberships in 2017 was \$3,620, and it was broken into the following categories: \$1,200 in lifetime memberships (\$200 per), \$450 in business memberships (\$20 per); \$1,670 in individual memberships (\$10 per), and \$300 in patron memberships (\$50 per).



Gone are the Blue Light Specials by Cam Stadtmueller



This past fall, K-Mart permanently closed store #4334 in Harborcreek. The grand opening for the store was November 24, 1969. It included a ribbon cutting ceremony performed by Eastern Region Vice President of the SS Kresge Company David Matson and Manager John Reilly, along with his wife and their nine children. Each of the children was given a piece of the ribbon as a souvenir.

Those living in the township before the store was built will recall that the southeast corner of Buffalo and Nagle Roads – the corner that was transformed into a “modern day” plaza - was a corn field! K-Mart was built as the anchor store of the plaza; ten other businesses filled the remaining store fronts. Ample parking allowed for stress free shopping.

In October 2017, current and past employees of K-Mart store #4334 gathered for a farewell celebration. The photograph shown here is one of many provided by the Society for a slideshow that was shown at the party.

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 or call (814) 899-4447 if you have a story you'd like to see printed. We look forward to hearing from you.