

# THE HARBOR VIEW

*A quarterly newsletter of the Harborcreek Historical Society*



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## Request an e-newsletter!

If you would like to request to receive newsletters electronically, send a current email address to [harborcreekhistory@gmail.com](mailto:harborcreekhistory@gmail.com).

Print copies of the newsletter are available in black and white only, while the digital version is in full color.

## Harborcreek Historical Society

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**Hours:** Saturdays 10:00 am - 2:00 pm,  
Wednesdays 12:00 - 4:00 pm (June thru August), or by appointment

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Melinda Meyer, President  
John Skuce, Treasurer  
Jane Ingold, Secretary  
Nancy Brown  
Cindy Duda  
Louise Smerick

## 2022 SUMMER EVENTS

### Tuesday Talks

**Dates:** June 14, July 26, and August 23

**Time:** 6:30 pm

**Location:** Gifford-Blanchfield House, 5661 Buffalo Road

Organized by volunteers Larry Beard and Nancy Brown, Tuesday Talks provide an opportunity for people to gather, learn about, and discuss Harborcreek places, happenings, and families. Each Tuesday Talk focuses on a different topic, the first of which is Factory Gulch, an area of the township that once featured a high concentration of mills. When possible, items in the society's collections relating to discussion topics will be displayed, and attendees are invited to bring photographs and items of their own to share.

### Smiley's Ice Cream Truck

**Dates:** June 29, July 14, and August 17

**Time:** 4:30 – 7:00 pm

**Location:** Parking Lot of the Gifford-Blanchfield House, 5661 Buffalo Road

Smiley's Ice Cream Truck is again serving up smiles and tasty treats this summer from the parking lot of the Gifford-Blanchfield House. The truck serves ice cream made by the Penn State Berkey Creamery. Be sure to stop in and satisfy your sweet tooth!



### Spring Speaker Series

All three presentations will take place at the Harborcreek Township Municipal Building, 5601 Buffalo Road.



### Coding Mary Behrend's Calendar: A Digital Humanities Challenge

**When:** Thurs, May 26, 2022, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

**Presenter:** Elisa Beshero-Bondar, PhD,  
Director of the Digital Humanities Lab at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College

This project involved working with Mary Behrend's hand-drawn images on a page-a-day style calendar from 1909!

*Photograph Credit:* <https://behrendblog.com/2014/03/03/women-in-history-month-meet-mary-behrend/>

## GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

*In Memory of Dave Hines*

*In Memory of Neil Evans*

*In Memory of Dale Willats*

*In Memory of David E. Johnson*

*In support of Pavilion Project*

*In support of the Society*

*Mary Moon, Brenda Morrison, Judy & Hank Hojak, Ted & Carol Reichert, Jim & Amy Salvatore*

*Pam Willats Whitmore, former neighbor*

*Beth Evans Simmons, former neighbor*

*Skarzenski Family, Stan's Garden Center*

*Rolf Bork in memory of Gerri*

*Jenny Brinling, Ruth Speice, and Janet Yoder*

*Linda Miklinski, Jim Gelsie*

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 donating "In Memory," "In Honor," or "On the Occasion" of a person or event that is important to you.

## Spring Speaker Series

*(Continued from Cover)*

### **Preserving Our Natural Legacy: The Natural History Museum at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center**

**When:** Thurs, June 9, 2022, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

**Presenter:** Mark Lethaby, Curator of the Natural History Museum at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center

The Natural History Museum at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center houses collections of a variety of plants and animals from northwestern Pennsylvania for research and education. A discussion of the uses and importance of natural history collections will be presented, as well as a brief description and history of the TREC Museum. Specimens from the museum will be on hand for close viewing.

### **Coastal Resources Management Program: Protecting PA's Coastlines for 40+ Years**

**When:** Thurs, June 16, 2022, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

**Presenter:** Shelby Clark, Coastal Resources Coordinator, Lake Erie Coastal Zone, Department of Environmental Protection

The shoreline is very important to the history of Harborcreek Township, and it has been monitored by the Coastal Zone program for four decades. Clark will provide a brief history of Pennsylvania's Coastal Resources Management Program, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2020. She will share recent aerial photos of the Lake Erie shoreline and provide dos and don'ts for property owners, regardless of where they live.

## What is this?

The following photograph was taken at Shorewood Beach, and Harborcreek Township Supervisor Steve Oler asked the society to assist in identifying what it is. Unable to find any clues in the archives, we are asking for your help in figuring out the history of it. Please contact the society at (814) 899-4447 or harborcreekhistory@gmail.com if you know what it is.



# Harborcreek Son Brigadier General August R. Pede

by Jane Ingold

In the green opposite the entry to Gannon's Waldron Campus Center is a historical marker for one of Harborcreek's sons. It reads:

*In memory*

*Brigadier General August R. "Gus" Pede  
United States Army (Retired)  
1933-1998*

*Commissioned a lieutenant of infantry from Gannon's ROTC program upon graduation in 1955, August R. Pede became the first Gannon alumnus to attain the rank of brigadier general. His distinguished army career spanned nearly 30 years and included service in Vietnam, Germany, and Washington, D.C. During the last decade of his career, he was recognized as the Army's foremost expert in management information and computer systems.*

*General Pede retired in December 1984 after serving as Commanding General of the United States Army Computer Systems Command. His many awards included the Distinguished Service Medal, our nation's highest peacetime military award, the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and Parachutist Badge.*

August Ronald Pede was born to Amedeo and Angelina Pallato Pede on June 3, 1933 in Lorain, Ohio. He graduated from Harbor Creek High School in 1951. Captioned "The Personality Kid" in his yearbook he was an athletic student and over the years he played basketball, football, baseball, and was a member of the dancing club. He participated in talents shows, the Monogram Club, the prom committee, was Camera Club president, and worked on the newspaper and the yearbook. He served as both class treasurer and president and was president of the National Honor Society as a junior and senior.

His senior yearbook contains a Crystal-Balling the

Seniors feature which envisioned his future: "Gusty Pede, Royal Potentate of the Order of the Green Thumb, is the proud owner of thirty-five greenhouses which stretch clear across the United States." The prediction was based on his parents' ownership of Pede's Greenhouse which was located at 5134 Buffalo Road near the intersection with Hannon Road. It's just to the east of current Bates Collision complex.

Pede took a different path instead. He attended Gannon where he joined the ROTC and was promoted in 1953 to First Lieutenant and was commissioned as Second Lieutenant upon graduation in 1955. He won numerous awards while at Gannon including the 1952 VFW Post 470 Award, the 1953 Bishop Gannon Junior Class Award, and the Msgr. Murphy award for excellence in philosophy in humanities at commencement. He was president of the ROTC's Order of the Flaming Torch and captain of its softball team. He wrote for the Gannon Knight newspaper. Midway through his college career he announced his engagement to Jeanette "Jan" Butler, daughter of William and Kathryn Butler of 1429 Davison Road. Jan was a secretary at Erie Foundry. Her maternal grandparents were Russell and Carrie Gifford.

After receiving his BS in Business at Gannon, he was assigned to Ft. Benning where Jan gave birth to a son on Thanksgiving Day. In all, they had three sons Steve, Jimmy, and Charles and a daughter, Kathy Ann. He later served in the 3rd Infantry Division in Wurzburg, Germany and by 1966 had been promoted to Major and was chief of production management at the Pentagon. He was promoted to Colonel in 1975 while he was with the Adjutant General Center. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter nominated Pede and 1953 Gannon alumnus Charles Drenz to be the first two from the Erie area to become brigadier generals in the regular Army. He was commander of Computer Systems Command when the promotion became official the next year. Incidentally, his son Brigadier General Charles N. Pede occupied the same post 30 years later.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## Office Hours

**Saturdays 10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**Wednesdays 12:00 – 4:00 pm (June thru August)**

The office is also open by appointment. Please call or email to schedule an appointment with our volunteers. Research inquiries are accepted by mail or email.

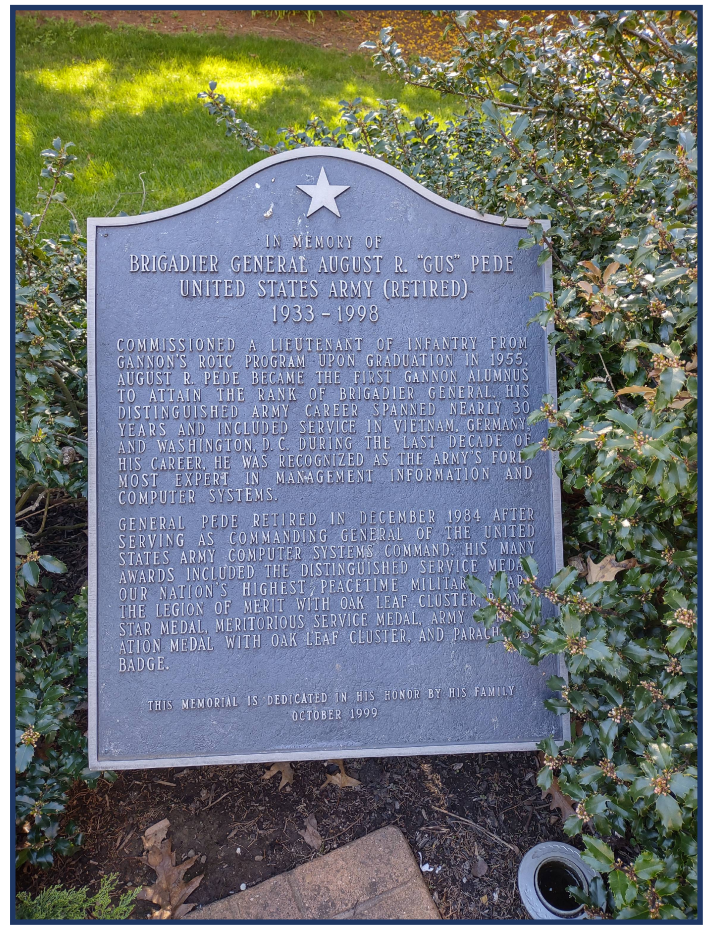
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# Brigadier General Pede

(Continued from Page 3)

Pede earned an MBA from George Washington University and took courses at the Infantry School, the Adjutant General School, the Armed Forces Staff College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Over his career he also had assignments in the Management Information Systems Directorate, Office of the Vice Chief of Staff, The United States Army Europe, and as the Deputy Chief of Staff in Europe.

Pede had a big year in 1984. He was honored at the Alumni College ROTC dinner in March where his brother-in-law Donald "Dutch" Hoffman (another Gannon alum who was married to Nance Pede) was master of ceremonies. In May he was made a Distinguished Alumnus. He also retired that year and became vice president and operations center manager for Visa International in McLean. He retired as senior vice president of operations in 1996. Pede died in Fairfax, VA on July 11, 1998 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. His wife Jan was laid to rest next to him in 2013.



Above: A historical marker honoring Brigadier General August Pede. (Left) Near Pede's marker are benches honoring him and his sister's husband Dutch Hoffman.

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

# Highlights of Harborcreek History

by Cam Stadtmueller

In 2019, the Harborcreek Historical Society's 25th anniversary year, the newsletter team began sharing the history of the township through a series of 'articles' formatted as a timeline. The following article is the tenth installment.

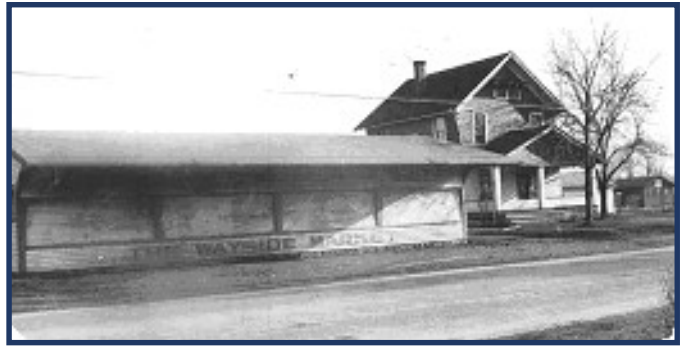
**1981:** The Wayside Market was located in Harborcreek Village at 6900 Buffalo Road. It was a popular fruit stand operated by Vern and Clara Hutchinson from the early 1930s until the late 1960s. Dennis Braendel purchased the property and developed it into the Harborcreek Mini Mall, which housed four separate businesses.

**1983:** Skylab Astronaut Paul J. Weitz visited Harborcreek following the completion of the Challenger Space Shuttle mission, which was the maiden voyage for the orbiter Challenger. While spending six days in space, the crew conducted multiple experiments that would set guidelines for future missions.

**1984:** Penn State Erie, the Behrend College campus saw construction of two new buildings. Hammermill and the Zurn Science Centers housed the "General Electric Foundation Computer Center, which provided the Behrend community with access to the mainframe and sixty microcomputers," according to the 1988 *Lion's Pride* yearbook. In addition, the buildings contained classrooms, laboratories, and faculty offices.

**1986:** Donna Mindek was elected as the first woman Supervisor in Harborcreek Township, after serving as township tax collector. During her 24 years of service Donna concentrated on fostering community growth and development. An active Chamber of Commerce paired with the township to begin the popular Harborfest on township property and later expanded to the Community Park on Firman Road. Donna was instrumental in the planning and implementation of Shades Beach development, which included a "safe boating" marina, large picnic pavilion facilities, and a children's playground. She served with the statewide Association of Township Supervisors beginning in 1991 and was elected Board President April 2004.

*Photographs: (From Top to Bottom) The Wayside Market c. 1925, Astronaut Paul Weitz, Behrend's multi-building science center which includes Zurn and Hammermill, and Shades Beach.*





## Erie County in World War II book authors seek photographs and stories relating to Harborcreek

The same group that wrote and published *Answering the Call, Erie County, PA in WWI* in 2021 is currently working on a follow-up publication, *Erie County in WWII*. It is important that the book include stories from rural Erie County, and the committee is actively seeking photographs and information representing agricultural and business activities in Harborcreek that supported the county's war efforts. Please contact Jane Ingold at [jli4@psu.edu](mailto:jli4@psu.edu) if you have photographs or other materials to share with the writing team.

## Gospel Hill Burial Ground attended to by Behrend's Athletic Department

We also wish to extend our deepest appreciation to the Behrend Athletic Department faculty and staff who dedicated two hours to raking leaves and piling sticks at the Gospel Hill Burial Ground on Monday, April 25. Due to the covid pandemic, it has been several years since the society last coordinated a clean-up event at the cemetery. There was much to do, and this crew got it done!

The Gospel Hill Burial Ground is owned by Harborcreek Township, and its ongoing care and preservation has been a signature project of the Harborcreek Historical Society since the society's founding year of 1994. Created in 1831, it is one of the oldest cemeteries in the township.



## Spring Clean-up at the Gifford-Blanchfield House

On Saturday, April 23 a hardworking team of ten volunteers spent the day picking up the grounds of the Gifford-Blanchfield House and cleaning the office and public spaces of the building. We are so incredibly grateful to those who participated and cleaned windows, raked leaves, picked up sticks, spread mulch, and weeded the garden. Thank you, too, to the township staff who picked up the large piles of branches and twigs. The Gifford-Blanchfield House looks amazing!

## 'Thank you' to two outgoing directors

Directors Vickie Gilchrist and Brenda Weaver recently stepped off the board, and we wish to thank them for their service to the Harborcreek Historical Society. While on the board, Vickie focused her energies volunteering for the society's public events. Brenda's contributions to the society included helping to manage the collections, creating new exhibits, and answering research requests. Both will be missed, and we wish them well in their future endeavors.

## 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!