

THE HARBOR VIEW

A quarterly newsletter of the Harborcreek Historical Society



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Gulch or gulf	...Page 2
We know what it is!	...Page 2
Smiley's spreads smiles	...Page 3
Harborcreek in Bloom	...Page 3
Zielinski Secret	...Page 3
HC History Highlights	...Page 5
Brookside donation	...Page 6
<i>Your Harborcreek</i> article	...Page 6
EriePics by Michael Nesgoda	...Page 6
Upcoming concert	...Page 6
Erie Gives Day	...Page 6

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If you would like to request to receive newsletters electronically, send a current email address to 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
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2022 Annual Meeting and "Show & Tell"

Saturday, August 27, 2022 at 10:00 am

At the Harborcreek Township Municipal Building

Annually, the society invites members to come together to review the achievements and financial activities of the organization from the previous year. This year's annual meeting, which is scheduled for Saturday, August 27th, will include an overview of the upcoming grant funded archives and pavilion projects.

The second half of the meeting will be a "Show & Tell." We invite all attendees to bring a little piece of Harborcreek history from home to "show" it around and "tell" those present about it. Attendees are welcome to bring family photographs or heirlooms, items from the garage, basement, or attic that are curiosities, or any other object or document of interest.

What will you bring?



Nancy Brown and Larry Beard presented the history of Factory Gulch at the first Tuesday Talk June 14th. Photograph by John D. Fox Photography.

Tuesday Talks

July 26 & August 23

6:30 pm at the Gifford-Blanchfield House

Organized by volunteers Larry Beard and Nancy Brown, "Tuesday Talks" provide an opportunity for people to gather, learn about, and discuss local places, happenings, and families. Each Tuesday Talk focuses on a different topic.

Sears kit homes will be the subject of our next "Tuesday Talk" July 26th. From 1908 to 1940, Sears, Roebuck and Company marketed, sold, and shipped approximately 100,000 kit houses in the U.S. Called "Modern Homes," they ranged from 4-room bungalows with no bath to 14-room, two-family homes with two baths. There are several Sears houses in Harborcreek, and the Harborcreek Historical Society would like to document them.

Can you help us gather information? If you have information on a Sears house in the township, please consider contacting the society at harborcreekhistory@gmail.com or (814) 899-4447.

How can you tell if you have a Sears kit house? Look for stamped lumber in the basement or attic.

(Continued on Page 2)

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

In support of the Society

Smiley's Ice Cream Truck

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.

Tuesday Talks *(Continued from Page 1)*

Sears Modern Homes were kit homes, and the framing members were stamped with a letter and a number to help with assembly. Look for shipping labels on the back of millwork. Check blueprints and other house documents for mention of Sears. Compare the home to images of available kits in the Sears catalogs.

Gulch or Gulf by Nancy Brown

During our June 14th presentation on Factory Gulch, the question once again was asked, "Is it Factory Gulch or Factory Gulf?" About two thirds of the audience said "gulch," while the remainder of the group said "gulf." After I returned home, I thought of a way to find out - once and for all - what was correct.

I have an old dictionary, copyrighted 1916, which has helped tremendously when I have run into archaic words in the Dodge family journals - words like enface, vendue, and stag (not a deer).

Perhaps it could solve the problem! IT DID.

According to the dictionary, a gulf is an inlet from an ocean or sea frequently creating a whirlpool. A gulch is a deep ravine created by a raging torrent. While I would not call Six Mile Creek a raging torrent these days, its water was much higher in years gone by and there have been several historic floods. It provided the waterpower for the Cass Woolen Mill from 1844 to 1886, which was located on Depot Road south of I-90. People hiking in Six Mile Creek Park have seen remnants of the foundations of the former mills in the gulch.

I think you will agree that the proper names for Harborcreek's landmarks are Factory Gulch and Cooper's Gulch, too.

We hope that you join us for the July 26th Tuesday Talk, which will begin our exploration of Sears kit houses in Harborcreek Township.

We know what it is!

The spring issue of *The Harbor View* included a photograph taken at Shorewood Beach by Harborcreek Township Supervisor Steve Oler. It featured a wooden frame situated on the bank of Twelve Mile Creek. We asked you to help identify what it is, and you did.

The wooden frame is what is left of an old suspension foot bridge that once crossed Twelve Mile Creek and provided access to cottages on the east side of the creek. It was gated and locked to prevent unwanted guests from accessing the cottages.

Thank you to all who responded on Facebook and via email and phone. We had a busy few days keeping up with the flurry of messages!

"Thank you" spring speakers!

We are so grateful to Dr. Elisa Beshero-Bondar, Mark Lethaby, and Shelby Clark for presenting as part of the society's spring speaker series - and the 40 or so people who came out to attend them! We learned about Mary Behrend, native flora and fauna, and Harborcreek's shoreline.



Shelby Clark, Coastal Resources Coordinator for the Lake Erie Coastal Zone, discussed the evolution of Harborcreek's shoreline and how to protect it on June 16th. Photograph by John D. Fox Photography.



Happy customers! Photograph by John D. Fox Photography.

Smiley's spreads smiles!

Smiley's Ice Cream Truck is again serving up smiles and tasty treats this summer from the parking lot of the Gifford-Blanchfield House. Their next stop is August 17th 4:30 – 7:00 pm. The truck serves ice cream made by the Penn State Berkey Creamery. Be sure to stop in and satisfy your sweet tooth!

Society's garden in bloom

The gardens of the Gifford-Blanchfield House have been entered in Harborcreek in Bloom, an annual friendly competition led by the Harborcreek Community Engagement Team. Registrations were due by May 31st, and all gardens – veggie, general, oasis, and kid's – will be showcased on social media and in the *Your Harborcreek* magazine. We are thankful for the efforts of our volunteers and the Gospel Hill Garden Club in keeping the society's gardens blooming and beautiful all summer!



Zielinski Secret by Jane Ingold

Edward and Theresa Zielinski had a funny “meet-cute” story and an even cuter honeymoon story. In the late 40s Theresa Miaczynski was working in the refrigeration department of General Electric as an evaporator tester where the department's repairman, Edward Zielinski, caught her eye. She spoke to him often because she would purposely make mistakes that required his expertise to fix.

The pair married on August 4, 1951. After they wed Theresa wrote a letter to the producers of the television game show *I've Got a Secret* to suggest that Ed be invited to appear. Ed's secret? He went on his honeymoon with 58 women. The story was deemed a good fit for the show, and the couple was flown to New York City where they were treated to a hotel stay and tickets to a club.

Here's how Ed happened to find himself in such an unusual situation. When they heard that the General Electric Secretaries Club, in cooperation with Worldwide Travel Service, was sponsoring a trip to Bermuda starting just nine days after their wedding, the newlyweds purchased the last two spaces. Their flight left on Monday, August 13th which was the start of GE's second week of summer shutdown. The trip included accommodations at the Hotel St. George in St. George's Parish as well as champagne, dancing, a beach party, and options to take a bicycling trip or a moonlight cruise. Bags were given as gifts to the ladies and sunglasses to the men. They were advised to carry their birth certificates with them, so that they could return to the US on Saturday, August 18th.

The panel for the show the week that Ed appeared included Bill Cullen, Jayne Meadows, Eddie Bracken, and Kitty Carlisle and the featured celebrity guest was gossip columnist Elsa Maxwell. The game allowed each panelist to ask questions until a buzzer sounded at which time the contestant earned \$10. Once it was clear that the secret involved a trip with many women, the panelists' questions led to raucous laughter from the audience who were always in on the secret:

(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.

Telephone: 814.899.4447 • Email: harborcreekhistory@gmail.com • Website: www.harborcreekhistory.org

New Members

Len Wicker, Harborcreek
Scott Ellwood, Harborcreek

Zielinski Secret *(Continued from Page 3)*

"Did you all do the same thing when you got there? Did they go along with you to watch you do something? Did you teach them anything? Did you use any portion of your body to do this?" During Bill Cullen's second round of questions, he had an epiphany: "Was this trip to celebrate something like an anniversary? Oh no.... I just thought of something. This couldn't have been a hon...was this a honeymoon?"

Ed was on screen a total of six minutes, and he won \$40.

The episode aired on October 23, 1952. That night the television station called to let the Zielinskis know that the show would be pre-empted due to some news related to the upcoming local election. They invited them and family members to come to the station and watch the show on the network feed. You, though, can watch it on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4cjFSY70u0>.

Edward was a member of the GE Quarter Century Club, retiring after 29 years. He was 89 when he passed away on January 23, 2002. Theresa passed away on Sunday, May 31, 2009, at the age of 80. After leaving GE, she worked for 20 years at Behrend. They rest together at Mount of Olives Cemetery and were survived by three sons John, James, and Mark.



Can you find Ed and Theresa Zielenski? From the General Electric newsletter.



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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 eleventh installment.

1980s – 1990s: The growth and development of multiple subdivisions increased the township's population. They included: Chriswood (1983), renamed Northview Heights, south of Cooper Road; Hoover Heights (1984), west of upper Davison Road; further development of Marshall Bell property into Dominion Drive (1985), east of Saltsman Road in Brookside; Walton Woods Phase 1 (1988), north of East Lake Road in Fairfield; Fox Hollow (1989), north of East Lake Road in Fairfield; Foxwood (1990), south of Cooper Road, grows to include 150 homes; and Bernwood (1994), west of lower Saltsman Road.

1991: Summerfest Celebration began at the municipal building as a community festival. The popularity of the event in '91 and '92 proved a larger venue was needed. It was renamed Harborfest and moved to Firman Fields on Clark Road, now Harborcreek Community Park. Thousands of residents were drawn to the event, which featured hot air balloons, amusement rides, vendors and food trucks, a marketplace for artisans and crafters, informational booths, live music, and the Miss Harborfest pageant. The Thursday through Sunday mid-July event attracted around 25,000 people. In 2004, an abnormal amount of rainfall saturated Firman Fields and caused amusement rides and vendor trucks to be trapped in deep mud. The Chamber of Commerce and Township officials discussed changes for Harborfest in 2005, but the event was permanently canceled.

1994: Harborcreek Historical Society began with its Articles of Incorporation being filed in Harrisburg in June. By November, the first Directors' meeting took place in the Reed Building at Penn State Behrend. Judy Wiczorek was elected President, replacing Beth Simmons, Vice President was Donna Mindek, Treasurer was Delores Hickernell, and Secretary was Linda Marker. First board members included Attorney Richard Cowell, Rodney Haynes, Ben Lane, and Virginia McGarvey. "The purpose of the society is to promote awareness of the history and heritage of the Harborcreek area and its environs and to encourage the identification, collection, and preservation of materials for those purposes."

1996: All roads in the township were paved with concrete, asphalt, or tar and chip rolled surfaces. No more dirt roads!



Photographs: (Top) Village of Foxwood, (Center) 1995 Harborfest poster designed by Roy Ahlgren, and (Bottom) Harborcreek Historical Society logo, which was designed by the inaugural board in 1994.



Donation from Brookside FD

The society recently received a donation of architectural and engineering drawings of shopping plazas, other key buildings, and township streets from Brookside Fire Department. The drawings span the 1960s to 1990s and were used to help firefighters know where hydrants, fire suppression systems, and other important building features were located. Thank you, Brookside, for adding these to the archives of the historical society!

Upcoming in *Your Harborcreek*

In recognition of the First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek's 190th anniversary, the summer issue of *Your Harborcreek* magazine will feature an article about an important project for the church occurring in 1983 – the relocation of the church's cemetery at the edge of the Village of Harborcreek on Route 20 to South Harborcreek United Methodist Church's cemetery. We hope you enjoy the story.



EriePics by Michael Nesgoda

In May, photographer and Harborcreek native Michael Nesgoda stopped by the Gifford-Blanchfield House for an on-site photography session with the house, collections, and grounds. You can view the images on Facebook at EriePics by Michael Nesgoda or at <https://www.eriepics.com/journeys/>. We are appreciative of his efforts to shine a light on Harborcreek history!

Archives project moves ahead

We announced earlier in the year that the Harborcreek Historical Society was awarded grant funding through the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for projects relating to the collections. Archives consultant Bryan Colvin, who is the University & Ridge Archivist for Mercyhurst University, has completed an assessment of the archives and prepared a report with suggested actions. Implementation of the recommendations will begin in July with the purchase of necessary equipment and supplies and continue into August with the hiring of a student intern who will process and digitize select materials. Digitization efforts will focus on the Dodge Family Collection, which includes personal journals and correspondence and financial ledgers and other business records dating from 1841 to the 1920s relating to the family of John Dodge, Sr.

Erie Gives Day

Please consider giving to the Harborcreek Historical Society on Erie Gives Day, the Erie Community Foundation's annual 12-hour community-wide online giving campaign, which will take place Tuesday, August 9, 2022 8 am to 8 pm at www.eriegives.org. Only Visa, MasterCard and Discover will be accepted online, but you may choose to participate via a check using the Erie Gives Check Contribution form, which will be accepted until Monday, August 8th. The minimum gift amount is \$25, and each donation will be enhanced with a prorated match. After donating at ErieGives.org, donors will receive an email receipt which should be saved for tax purposes.

We hope to be able to purchase items needed for the archives project with funds raised during Erie Gives Day, such as temperature and relative humidity sensors, 2-3 additional fire extinguishers, 1-2 dehumidifiers, upgrades to the security system, and a subscription to Preservica digital preservation, archiving, and storage software.

Concert at Community Park

Join us Friday, July 29, 2022 at 5:30 pm in Harborcreek Community Park for the township's summer concert series. Look for our booth! The evening kicks off with the Duke Sherman Band, who will be followed by Geek Army and a 10 pm fireworks display. Inflatable rides, face painting, and many more activities will be available for kids to enjoy.