



Harborcreek Historical Society
 5661 Buffalo Road, P.O. Box 121
 Harborcreek, PA 16421
 T: 814.899.4447
 E: harborcreekhistory@gmail.com
 www.harborcreekhistory.org

**Hours: Tues., Wed., Sat. 10 am – 2 pm,
 Thurs. 4 – 7 pm**



Picnic tables located on the lawn of the Gifford-Blanchfield House are ready for use! No reservations are required. Simply show up, and enjoy.

THE HARBOR VIEW



Harborcreek Historical Society celebrates 25 years in 2019!



Flagpole Dedication & Honor Ceremony

Saturday, June 8, 2019 at 12:00 pm

At the Gifford-Blanchfield House, 5661 Buffalo Road

Harborcreek Historical Society invites the community to a Flagpole Dedication & Honor Ceremony recognizing all veterans and current military on Saturday, June 8, 2019 from noon to 2:00 pm. Harborcreek Gold Star Families will be honored guests. A Gold Star Family is the immediate family member(s) of a fallen service member who died while serving in a time of conflict.

The Society is actively seeking photographs, documentation, and stories from current and past servicewomen and men to add to its collections. Individuals and families wanting to contribute materials may bring them to the June 8th event. Volunteers will be on-hand to make photocopies and scans of items or accept donations.

Harborcreek Historical Society thanks Harborcreek Township for its assistance in installing the new flagpole.

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Board of Directors

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John Skuce, Treasurer
Jane Ingold, Secretary
Nancy Brown
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Society joins Community Engagement Team

Harborcreek Township launched the HC Community Engagement Team (CET) last summer. The purpose of the group is to foster collaboration for the betterment of Harborcreek through the sharing of ideas and support of community-based activities within the Township. It is made up of representatives from churches, non-profits, businesses, the Harborcreek School District, Harborcreek Township and other local organizations, including the Harborcreek Historical Society.

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Go green and request an e-newsletter!

If you'd like to request to receive newsletters electronically, send a current email address to harborcreekhistory@gmail.com.

Gifts to the Society

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.

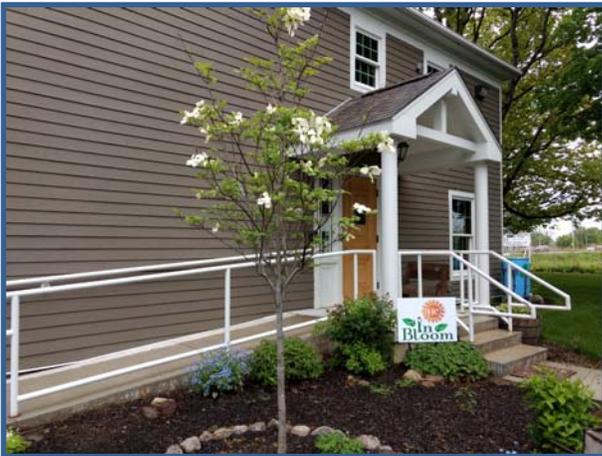
Community Engagement Team *(Continued from Cover)*

The Team meets during the lunch hour the second Tuesday of the month September through May at the Harborcreek Township Building. Participating members pay an annual membership fee of \$25, which covers the costs of meetings.

Initiatives supported by the Team include the Pack the Bus Promotion, Ella Cochran Food Pantry Drive, and the Harborcreek In Bloom Competition.



Questions about the CET should be addressed to Stacey Stranko at (814) 636-4419 or slstranko@gmail.com.



Gifford-Blanchfield House garden a Harborcreek In Bloom site

Thanks to the hard work of the Gospel Hill Garden Club, the Society is participating in Harborcreek Township's first annual HC In Bloom. The competition is open to residents and businesses for flower and vegetable gardens.

To register a garden, stop by the Township Building before May 31st. All registrants will receive a "HC In Bloom" yard sign to display in a visible location and a 10% discount coupon good for the purchase of plant materials from Stan's Garden Center on Buffalo Road.

Judging will take place the week of August 5th by volunteers from the Community Engagement Team. Winners will be notified the week of August 12th. In addition to receiving prizes, winning gardeners will also be featured in the fall 2019 issue of *yourHarborcreek Magazine*.

Mercyhurst students help create interpretive panels

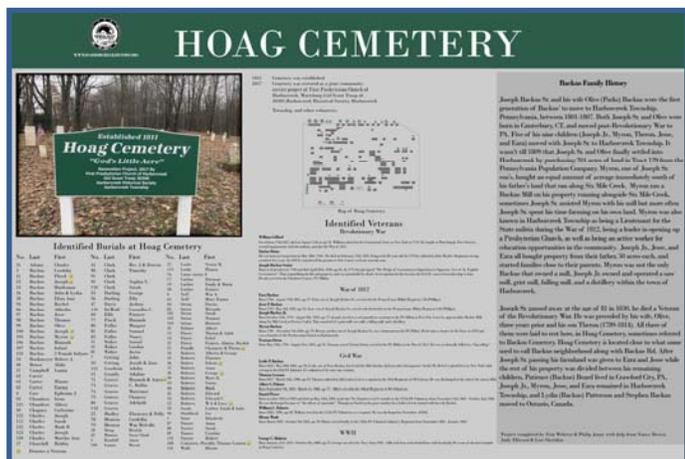
Four students enrolled in Mercyhurst University's Introduction to Historic Preservation course last fall helped develop text and select photographs for two new interpretive panels celebrating Harborcreek's history.

Molly Kennedy and Gretchen Evan worked with Society President Lori Sheridan on a panel highlighting the Russell Log Cabins. As the first tourism business in Harborcreek, Russell Log Cabins provided travelers an opportunity for some relaxation. With a restaurant, dance hall, gas station, and a motel, the location became a popular stop from the early 1900s until the late 1940s. The open field in front of the Harborcreek Township Building was once a full service rest stop with 21 rentable log cabins.

Once complete, the panel will be installed next to the freestanding fireplace that is all that remains of the Russell Log Cabins.

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Students help create interpretive panels *(Continued from Page 2)*



A panel about Hoag Cemetery (also known as Backus Cemetery) and the most recent restoration project at the cemetery was designed by Philip Jenny and Erin Webster with the help of Nancy Brown, Robin Cuneo, Judy Ellwood, and Lori Sheridan.

The panels, which are currently being proofread and edited by Society volunteers, will be fabricated and installed later this year. The project is funded in part by a Community Asset Grant from the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority awarded to Erie Yesterday and eight historical organizations, including the Harborcreek Historical Society.

Presently, the Society maintains interpretive panels at Gospel Hill Burial Ground, Roadside Park (about the Gauge War), Shades Beach, and the Gifford-Blanchfield House.



Let the bird watching begin!

The Society would like to thank Roger Pierce and John Skuce for building and installing a blue bird house on the grounds of the Gifford-Blanchfield House. Last fall, the Township removed a large storage building located between the parking lot of the house and the corn fields. The bird house is a welcome addition to the now vacant lot.

And the Society is pleased to report that the first tenants have already moved in!



History book for sale at barber shop

Harborcreek Yesteryears, the Society's most popular publication, is now available for purchase at Terry Etzel's Barber Shop in Wesleyville. The cost per book is \$5, and Etzel's is open Tuesday through Saturday 8:30 am to early evening.

The Society is grateful for this partnership as *Yesteryears* has been flying off the barber shop shelves!

Office Hours

Regular Hours: Tues., Wed., Sat. 10 am – 2 pm, Thurs. 4 – 7 pm
Please call or email to schedule an appointment with our volunteers.
Research inquiries welcome.

Telephone: 814.899.4447 Email: harborcreekhistory@gmail.com
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It's prom season

This photograph of the Harbor Creek High School prom king and queen and court from 1957 was submitted by longtime member Barbara Chambers. The queen, Miss Carol Seyschab (Barbara's cousin), went on to marry her king, John Ogle, and they later relocated to Lake Jackson, Texas.

With this quick look-back, the Society wishes to congratulate all of the prom kings and queens of 2019!

If you wish to look back on other past prom royalty, the reference library at the Gifford-Blanchfield House offers Harbor Creek School District yearbooks/annuals, beginning with 1907.

Newspaper clipping, unknown source, 1957. Submitted by Barbara Chambers to the Harborcreek Historical Society March 30, 2019.

The collections continue to grow

Since moving into the Gifford-Blanchfield House two years ago, the collections have grown at a steady rate. This is thanks to the generosity of you – members and friends of the historical society.

The photograph on the right shows the shelving unit used to house new donations made to the Society for inclusion in the archives and object collection. As you can see, the shelves are full! They contain photographs, advertisements for long-gone Harborcreek businesses, and a variety of family records that volunteers are currently processing.

Thank you for helping to grow the permanent record of Harborcreek's history!



PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

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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.**

Highlights of Harborcreek History by Cam Stadtmueller

During 2019, the Harborcreek Historical Society's 25th anniversary year, the newsletter team would like to share with you the history of the township through a series of 'articles' formatted as a timeline. The following article is the first of three.

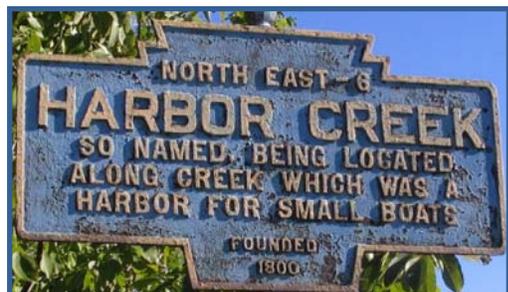
1795 General William Irvine selected land near the mouth of Six Mile Creek. Irvine's Reserve extended south as far as a line parallel to what is Firman Road today. Harborcreek Historical Society is located in the Gifford Blanchfield House, which was built on the Irvine Reserve property.

1797 The sloop *Washington* was constructed at the mouth of Four Mile Creek. It is believed to be the oldest confirmed commercial sailing ship to exist on the Great Lakes and the first to sail in Lakes Erie and Ontario. It was financed by the Pennsylvania Population Company, and construction was supervised by Epipaulet Beebe.



1802 Thomas Rees, a surveyor and land agent for the Pennsylvania Population Company, selected acreage from Six Mile Creek west to what is today the Gospel Hill area. He established his residence and farms near the crest of Hannon Road. A stone springhouse that is visible on the property today is thought to be the oldest structure in the township.

1803 Erie County was divided up into 16 townships, one of which was Harborcreek Township. The township quickly developed the following villages: Harbor Creek, Moorheadville, Clark Settlement, Wesleyville, and Boscobel.



1812 A post office was established at Moorheadville.

1815 William Saltsman built a sawmill in the gully on Four Mile Creek. In 1826, he added a grist mill. The area of Saltsman's mills is now known as the Cooper Road area. The Gospel Hill Methodist Church, built on Station Road, began this same year.

1816 Neely bought Dobbin's Mill on Twelve Mile Creek and ships locally milled flour to Buffalo. After 1825, flour was shipped via the Erie Canal for destinations on the East Coast.

1823 The Gospel Hill Burial Ground was founded and located on Station Road. Land for the burial ground was donated by the Rees Family.

1832 The Presbyterian Church started in the Village of Harborcreek. A post office was established in the Village this same year. The township was spelled 'Harbourcreek.'

1841 South Harborcreek Methodist Church was founded at Davison and McGill Roads.

Class reunion season is upon us

Summer is the season for class reunions, like the 2018 All-class Harbor Creek School District Reunion pictured to the right.

For those who are planning upcoming reunions, please consider scheduling a guided tour of the township with one of the Society's volunteers. Volunteers are available to guide a bus, van, or trolley tour of Harborcreek Township. The tour will include historic buildings and sites, and may be customized to suit your group's needs and interests. To discuss tour details and scheduling information, contact us at (814) 899-4447 or harborcreekhistory@gmail.com.



We are also able to accommodate small groups at the Gifford-Blanchfield House for visits to the research and reference library and tours of the exhibit spaces and archives.

For those who are participating in reunions this year, please be sure to share photographs, programs, and interesting stories with the Society, as we will add these materials to the collections and use them to publish an article in *The Harbor View* quarterly newsletter.



A good time to dust off the walking and driving tours

Whether you are on foot or in a car, these self-guided tours will take you to places of interest in the Village of Harborcreek or throughout the township. They include well-known sites like the Gospel Hill Burial Ground and Logan House, as well as lesser-known places like the location of Thomas Rees' homestead.

The Village of Harborcreek Walking Tour Guide is a brochure that is available free-of-charge, while the Driving Tour of Harborcreek Township is a small booklet costing \$2.00. Both may be picked up at the Harborcreek Historical Society's offices in the Gifford-Blanchfield House.

Celebrating healthy kids at the Eastside YMCA's open house

On Saturday, May 18th, volunteers from the Society attended the Eastside YMCA's open house. The open house kicked off at 1:00 pm with a pool party. The Society's information table offered the chance to play old fashioned games, assemble a map of Harborcreek Township, and flip through *Harborcreek Yesteryears*. A good time was had by all.



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.