A History of Harcrest Farm and Park

A photo journey of the Hartzell Family, the founders of Harcrest Farm and Park

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Introduction

"For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land--a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs, gushing out into the valleys and hills…"
(Deuteronomy 8:7 NIV)

Harcrest Park was created when Dale and Bette Hartzell sold the remaining acres of Harcrest Farm to Penn Township in 2007. This land had been farmed by the Hartzell family for over 100 years and was designated as a Century Farm in the late 70s by the State of Pennsylvania. It is uniquely situated in Penn Township among rolling knolls and a small stream that meanders through the middle of green grass and lovely wooded views. If you are lucky, you might catch a glimpse of wildlife, perhaps a fox, turkey, or deer.

There isn't an inch of this ground that I haven't been over, on bare feet, on horseback, on bicycle, and on tractor. I climbed trees; I helped mend fences; I took care of animals; I found arrowheads. The history of the farm was a story that I learned at my father's side. I spent 22 years of my life calling the farm home.

I learned to love Jesus and the Bible because of my parent's faith. Their life story can't be told without touching on that faith, so I have included a Bible verse at the beginning of each chapter. I was fortunate to be their child. I would also like to thank my brothers, Dave and Jim, and my sister, Ellen, because they made growing up on the farm so fun. Also, Tim Engleman was generous with both his time and his advice. Thank you to these people.

As you enjoy walking through the park on a bright spring day, perhaps you might wonder about the history of the land. The following pages highlight the stories that I both learned and lived.

Sarah (Sally Hartzell) Giamporcaro
May 17, 2025

Community Days

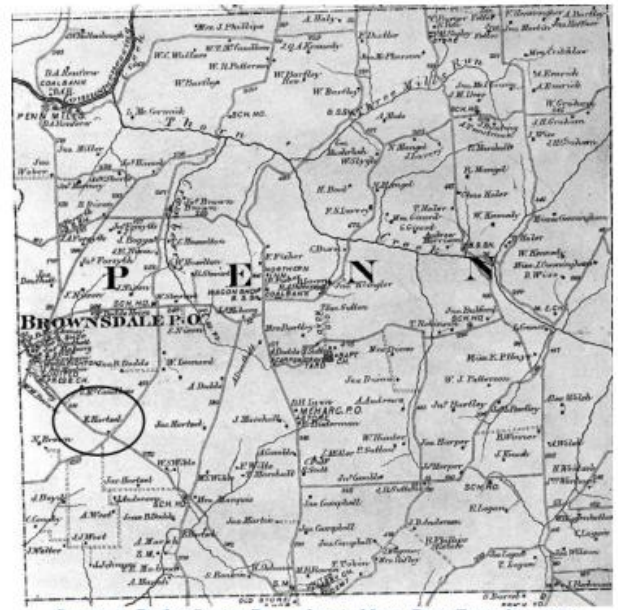
The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. (Psalm 19:1, NIV)

Since 2018, Harcrest Park has held a Community day each summer. Last year, more than 500 people came to these exciting outings, celebrating neighbors and friends.

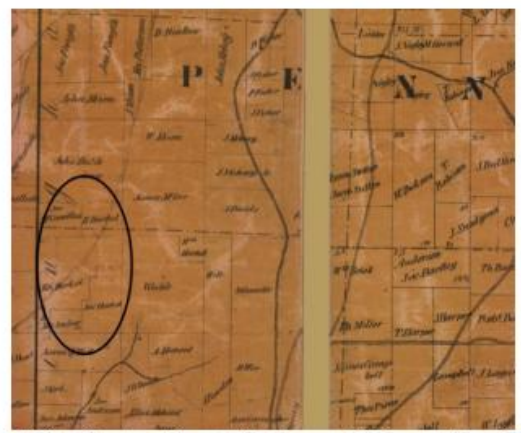
For one afternoon, people from around Penn Township can enjoy food, raffles, a petting zoo, hayrides, a bounce house, Touch-a-Truck, pony rides and live entertainment. Local businesses come together to make the day a special one for you and your family.

Photos Courtesy of Penn Township

All of the fun activities take place at Harcrest Park, a sixty-five-acre park in Penn Township. This park has a playground, swings, pavilions, Disc Golf, and walking trails. It is beautiful rolling ground with lots of trees and a small stream, where you can experience nature and animals in their natural habitats. It is a place to come and make memories and enjoy the feel of grass beneath your bare feet and the sun shining on your back. And if you look hard enough, you can see the result of hundreds of years of history, spread out before you on the meadows and in the valley.



Survey 1: Butler County Pennsylvania Maps, Penn Township, 1874



Survey 1: Photo Courtesy of AncestorTracks.com, 1858 Survey of Penn Township

The Founding of Harcrest Farm

Trust in the LORD and do good; Dwell in the land, and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalms 37:3, NIV)

Eli Hartzell was the son of Jonas and Mary Hartzell. Born in 1819 and raised in Harmony, Pennsylvania, he watched his father build and repair wagons. When his father had enough money, he purchased a farm in Jackson Township. Eli, along with his older brother Jacob, were hard-workers and learned much at their father's side. Eventually, as the boys grew, they wanted farms of their own.

At the age of 23, Eli married Elizabeth "Eliza" Stamm in February of 1843. Within a year, Eli moved with his wife and young son to Middlesex Township. There, in 1844, he and his brother Jacob farmed the land around the intersection of Brownsdale and Three Degree Roads. The map on the previous page shows the location of both Eli and Jacob's farms as they looked in the late 1800s.

Eli and his wife attended United Presbyterian Church in Middlesex and leaned heavily on their faith as their first son passed away at the age of five and their second son, eight months old, soon succumbed to the same illness. In 1850, Eliza became pregnant with her third child. Eli expanded his farm by purchasing 45 additional acres of land from Samuel White. He now had a residence that was fairly close to the crossroads of Brownsdale and Three Degree Roads. Eli was busy that year, as he also built the barn that was located to the west of the home. His third son, Henry Madison was born in September of 1850.

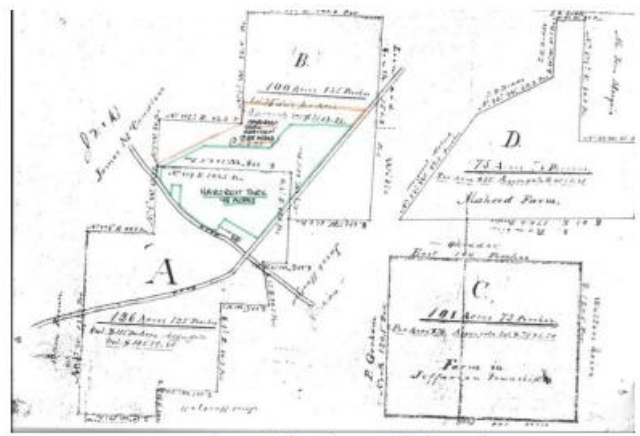
In 1854, Penn Township was founded of land that was formerly south Butler Township and North Middlesex Township. Additionally, Eli's older brother Jacob, would purchase the neighboring farm to the east. Now both their farms were officially located in Penn Township.

Eli purchased 78 additional acres from Robert McCandless four years later in 1858. His land now included all four corners of the crossroads of Brownsdale and Three Degree Roads. As his brother, Jacob, had the farm next door, undoubtedly the two worked together. In that era, a young farmer would hold a plowing bee and his neighbors would assemble and in one or two days he would have his whole season's plowing completed. The affairs were made an occasion of feasting and sociability. They would also assemble in the fall to harvest the wheat. Frequently the spirit of rivalry crept in among the younger men and turned the meet into a

Picture 1: Dale holding cradle used by Eli. Also pictured, Bette, and grandchildren, Mario and Maria

Picture 2: Henry Madison Hartzell

Picture 3: Leticia Anderson Hartzell



Survey 3: Four Farms of Eli Hartzell

Eli Hartzell

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Henry Hartzell

test of skill and endurance in the use of the cradle (or scythe). It was reported that Eli could cradle an eight-acre field of wheat in one day, so he was extraordinarily athletic. In addition to cutting the wheat, it had to fall in such a manner so that those following could tie the sheaves together so the wheat would stand up straight and properly dry. It was a detailed and time-consuming process that was made fun by competition and good food.

The first battle of the Civil war took place in July of 1861 at Bull Run in Manassas, Virginia. At 42, Eli was likely considered too old for a soldier, so he stayed at home to farm his land. His son, Henry, was eleven years of age, and, perhaps fortunately for Eliza, too young to go to battle. Together Eli and Eliza followed the course of the war, using an atlas and marking battles and making notes on the margins. They did this throughout the war until 1865, when General Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Courthouse on April 9th.

Eight years later, Eli, at age 53, and Eliza, passed away of influenza just 13 days apart in January of 1873. Eliza passed away first on the 9th, and Eli passed away on the 22nd. Both were buried at the Middlesex United Presbyterian Church, of which they were members.

At the time, Henry was just 22 years of age and he was left with the care of his younger brothers, William (18), George (13), and James (10). At this time, almost every rural person was a farmer. If you could produce enough food for your family, you were successful because no one needed much money then. Expenses were very minimal and you could even trade some farm produce for an item you needed, as the main purpose of the farm was to be self-supporting. However, a good farmer always had a surplus. The ones who had a surplus could take it into town with the horses and wagon to sell it, thus receiving enough money for further expansion. Through these types of investment, Eli had expanded his holdings to four farms.

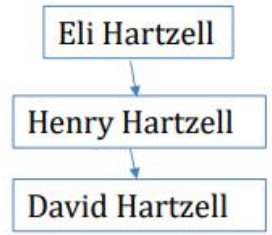
As you can see from attached diagram to the left, Henry retained the main farm, Plot A, approximately 126 acres that sat at the intersection of Brownsdale and Three Degree Roads and includes much of Harcrest Park. Plot B consisting of approximately 100 acres (and includes part of Harcrest Park) was given to William. (William later sold this land and the land was repurchased in 1945 by Henry's descendant, Dale Hartzell, combining Plot's A and B.) James received a farm in Jefferson Center, Plot C, and George got a farm about a mile east of Three Degree Road on Brownsdale Road, Plot D.

For death tax purposes, an inventory of Eli's goods and chattels was taken on January 31, 1873. Many of Eli Hartzell's final death appraisements are indecipherable, but the inventory included 97 items and totaled $10,441.39, a remarkable amount of money for that time. Some of the list is as follows:

one grain cradle ($1.00), corn in shock ($120.00), nine head of cows ($225.00), 11 heads of hogs ($25.00), 20 tons of hay ($300.00), 1 keg of lard ($3.50), one pruning knife ($2.50), one saddle and bridle ($10.00), one tin and one wooden bucket ($11.50), one copper kettle ($2.00), three cider barrels, ($1.50), keg of vinegar and pickles ($1.00), one lot of carpenter tools ($20.00), one old ax ($2.00), 15 pounds of nails ($1.00), and ropes ($5.00). We do know that he owned a spoke shaver that had been passed down from his father and was used to make many of the wagon wheels in his career at Harmony. Eli also had a rope maker, which was used to create the above-mentioned rope needed for the farm.

At the time of his mother's and father's death, Henry was in charge of his three younger brothers, four farms and a sizeable inventory of farm goods. It is no surprise that he needed money and help. He married Leticia Margaret Anderson within a year on December 31, 1873 in a three-couple wedding. (The other two couples were John Renfrew and Helena Crowe, and JM Douthett and Elizabeth Crowe—sister to Helena.)

Picture 4: David Lusk Hartzell, born 1885



Early Years on the Farm

He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure. (Isaiah 33:6, NIV)

Within thirteen years, Henry and Leticia had five children, Rebecca Ellen, Samuel McKee, Ora Eli, Edna Agnes, and David Lusk Hartzell who was born in 1885.

In 1901, when his son, David, was sixteen, Henry had the original residence removed and the present red brick farmhouse was relocated about 100 feet further to the west on Brownsdale Road. This new home was to provide for Henry's growing family.

Together with his son, David, Henry went to Pittsburgh in a wagon pulled by a team of horses. In the fall of the year, they would sell eggs, butter, potatoes, apples, chicken meat and pumpkins. They would drive the team of horses to Allison Park, getting there in the afternoon and spend a night at a hotel. Then, they would get up early around 3:00 a.m. and go to Pittsburgh to sell to specific customers who had contracted with them. They would come home the next day.

In order to supplement his market route, Henry planted a line of black cherry trees across from the farmhouse, and an orchard a bit further to the south. This orchard was home to various kinds of apple, pear, plum, and peach trees. It looked beautiful in the springtime when it was in bloom. There was a woven wire fence around it and sheep grazed under the trees. He also added a vineyard to the east of his home. Finally, he milked cows by hand and sold cream to the Brownsdale Creamery, which was located about a mile west of his farm.

Henry and David must have been good managers because Henry expanded the barn twice, built his new home, expanded the homestead acreage and gave it to his son, David, and also purchased a farm for three of his other children (one married a farmer who already had land).

Picture 5: Shortline at Stop by Country Club, Photo from Penn Panorama

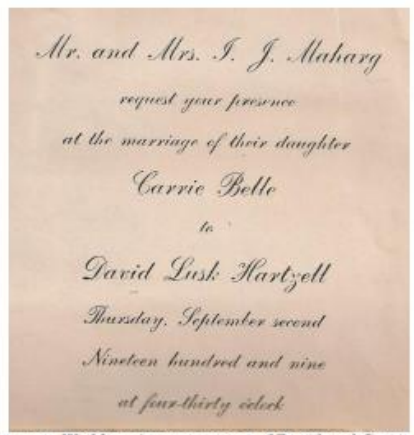
Henry supplemented his income by hiring out his team of horses for excavation work. In 1907, he used his team to assist putting in the Pittsburgh and Butler Street Railway, commonly called the Butler Shortline. He scooped out dirt and moved it around to create the pathway for the new line, which ran along the eastern border between his acreage and his uncle Jacob's farm. The Shortline was a broad gauge streetcar line that connected Pittsburgh to Butler. There was a Hartzell stop approximately a quarter mile away from the barn on

Brownsdale Road, just east of the crossroads. This transit was an important line for the market route, as well as providing transit for many people.

Many times, people from Lyndora and Butler would take the streetcar south to the Hartzell stop and get out and pick the wild berries that grew on the farm. Henry had a bit of a hard time protecting his fruit, but he never begrudged their need for food. Brownsdale Road had a trestle bridge above it for the Shortline to cross over and his future grandchildren would walk underneath the bridge to get to school. They then would put pennies on the track so the streetcar would flatten them.

For at least seventeen years, Henry (and then David) shipped cow's milk to the Evergreen Dairy in Millvale, Pennsylvania. By 8:00 a.m. they had finished milking the cows by hand and had twenty to twenty-five gallons of milk, stored in five-gallon cans, ready and waiting at the Hartzell stop. The milk then travelled on the streetcar and was delivered to Evergreen Dairy. In order to increase his milk production, David and his father remodeled the barn in 1914 to create more stalls for cattle. He also added a silo so that the cows would have better feed and thus produce more milk.

In April of 1909, Henry lost his wife, Leticia and had her buried at North Union cemetery. This was the church that they faithfully attended and had strong ties to, as their daughter, Rebecca, married the pastor of the congregation, Reverend Thomas James Blair. At this time, Henry turned the control of his homestead and farm over to his son, David, but he continued to live in the big red farmhouse.


Mr. and Mrs. I. J. Maharg
request your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Carrie Belle
to
David Lusk Hartzell
Thursday, September second
Nineteen hundred and nine
at four-thirty o'clock

Picture 6: Wedding Announcement of David and Carrie Hartzell

Picture 7: Carrie (Maharg) Hartzell

That same year in September, at the age of 24, David was married to Carrie Belle Maharg, the daughter of Isaiah (Isaac) John Maharg and Jennie Conabee. David was dating another girl when he met Carrie at a school activity. He then asked Carrie out. A third girl asked him to quit dating Carrie and date her, so as a landholder and a young attractive man, he was in demand. David was the youngest member of his family and Carrie was the oldest in a family of nine, many of them girls. She was in the top of her graduating class at Slippery Rock and taught all grades at the one-room schoolhouse located in Phillips City.

After they married, they had six children: Marian Belle, Ruth Letitia, John Madison, Emma Jean, Esther Elizabeth, and David Dale, born in 1923. In order to decrease confusion, David Dale went by his middle name his entire life.

Picture 8: From Left to Right, Esther, Ruth, Marion, Dale, Emma

In 1915, David added a bathroom to the second floor of the house. He put a windmill at the top of the hill across the road and pumped the water down and up to the second floor with a gas-powered motor. This was one of the first homes in the county to have running water on a second floor. He also added two more rooms to the brick farmhouse so that his girls would have more room for their bedrooms. In that same year, he added a hay shed to the farm outbuildings.

Esther was born in 1919 in the front bedroom of the big brick farmhouse. She remembered her grandfather, Henry, had a small shop building out of which he worked. He would sharpen knives, hoes, and scythes on a grindstone, and repair harnesses and wagon wheels. He also worked the fields using a team of horses to cultivate the cornfields with a one-row cultivator. On the west side of Henry's shop was a chicken pen, a corncrib, and a pigpen that was in a row that led to the big red barn. Henry and David kept their livestock in good condition. (Childhood Memories, Esther Hixon).

As an ex-school teacher, Carrie insisted that the children do their homework and speak proper English. She was a small woman with long dark hair parted in the middle, which she rolled into a knot at the back of her head, making her look stately. She braided it each evening so her hair would be full when it was taken down in the morning.

Her father-in-law, Henry made cornhusk rugs for the floors. He also kept the wood box full of split firewood for the kitchen cook stove and started the fire for Carrie each morning. She baked eight to ten loaves of bread twice a week, and no less than five to six crusted fruit pies at a time. In one day, Carrie canned a hundred quarts of peaches. She also canned hundreds of jars of cherries, blackberries, jellies, and jams each year. Apples from the orchard were gathered later in the fall and stored in the apple cellar.

When she had to cook for the men who were hired to help thresh the grain, it was said that the table looked fit for a wedding dinner. She liked fine china and she set an elegant table. To be able to take care of her husband, six children, her father-in-law Henry, and often a hired man, and put together three meals was a work of art. David asked the blessing before each meal and Henry returned the thanks after they ate. No one was allowed to leave the table until the thanks were delivered. (Childhood Memories, page 3).

Carrie insisted that all of the girls learn to play the piano. Neighbors used to congregate and they would sing together. A parent teacher meeting was held at Mahood school the last Monday of each month. At this one-room school, the teacher taught grades one through eight. As Esther recalled, every teacher could play the piano and the children learned songs of all types: patriotic songs, hymns, songs by Stephen Foster, and other popular songs. The students practiced them all month and sang them for the P.T.A., as well as reciting poems that they had learned. Once or twice a year, the parents were responsible for the meeting content, and David and Carrie sang a duet of "Whispering Hope". (Childhood Memories, page 5).

In 1928, they bought their first closed car. It had glass windows, folding seats behind the front seats for small children, and was called a seven-passenger limousine. It was so luxurious that Esther would sit in it for hours. The radiator had to be drained in the fall and refilled in the spring, as there was no such thing as antifreeze. Roads were impassable for automobiles in the winter.

They also remodeled their home, adding two rooms (one on each floor) and making the house square. In addition, they added a porch to the front of the house. There was a version of a dumb waiter in the corner of the kitchen. Shelves could be lowered to the cellar to keep the food cooler and brought back up by cable. They heated water in a copper wash boiler on the kitchen stove and carried it to the

washing machine in the cellar. They made soap, which they added to the water. A gasoline motor (which was notoriously hard to start) ran the washer. In the cellar, they had a 100-bushel potato bin and a 100-bushel coal bin.

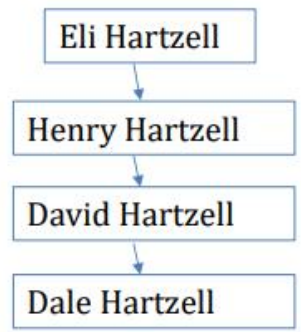
On September 27, 1929, the Butler County Airport opened. From the top of the orchard hill, David's children observed airplanes flying into the new airport. There were four olive green monoplanes and several biplanes. They walked to the airport, as traffic was heavy. The Airport Road was completely filled with parked cars from the Stepp Inn to the Airport, and cars were parked all the way to the Harcrest Farm crossroads. There was a carnival feel as the owners' distributed balloons and sold rides on an airplane for $1.00.

Personnel from the airport asked if they could put a white flag on the ground above the Brownsdale crossroads and they put another one at the north side of the airport. This made a two-mile span over which the planes would fly and time their speed. Dale recalls watching the planes and enjoying their flights. Additionally, the girls would sunbathe behind the house and wave at the pilots as they flew by.

One time, Dale remembers that Amelia Earhart visited the airport. According to the Butler Regional Airport's website, Amelia Earhart "did in fact do much more at Butler County than get her photo taken. She received her instrument training here in addition to having long range fuel tanks installed on her Lockheed 5B Vega", so apparently, she spent some time there.

The stock market crashed in 1929 and the great depression arrived. David had products to sell, but no one had money to buy anything, so clothes were recycled and passed around. No one ridiculed the used clothes though, because everyone was in the same predicament. By 1931 the Shortline streetcar was discontinued, so the farm became a bit more isolated from the towns surrounding it.

Picture 9: View of Harcrest Farm from Crest of Hill



Farming Practices

The earth has produced its harvest; God, our God, blesses us. (Psalm 67:6, NIV)

Farmers at this time used horses to remove stumps and clear land so they could have open areas that were then planted in corn and grass. Once the ground was cleared, the horses were then used to plow, till, plant, and harvest, and generally provide the power for all sorts of crop tasks. Harcrest Farm was operating all their machinery with teams of horses at this time. David said he could remember using oxen when he was young, but Dale never saw a team of oxen on the farm. Additionally, horses were used for transportation, pulling buggies, surreys, bob-sleds and sleighs.

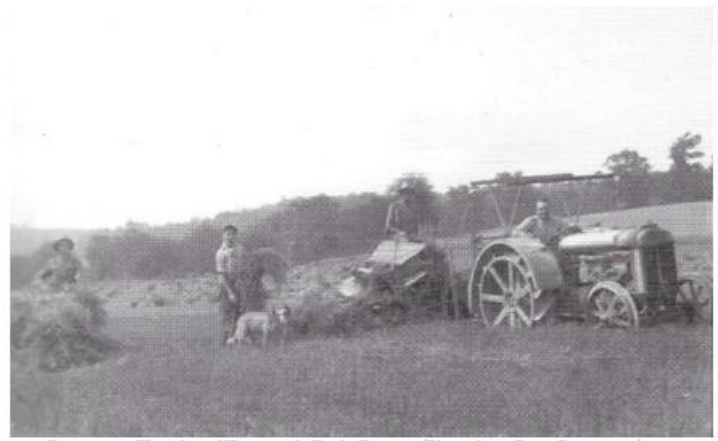
Hay was harvested and brought into the hay barn during the summer months. The young girls took turns riding the horse that pulled the hay up into the mow. In between loads of hay, Carrie kept a bucket of water, lemonade, or homemade ginger ale in the milk house at the barn.

David's children all attended Mahood School for their early training. It was a one-room schoolhouse about a mile down the road from Harcrest Farm. Typically, they walked to school, but if the morning chores took too long, sometimes they had to run to make the 9:00 a.m. start. There were times in the winter that the snow was so deep that David hitched the horses to the big sled and drove the children to school. There were no snow plows for Brownsdale Road!

Dale remembers first riding on the horses while David did the farm work. Later, as he grew, he was able to pick up ears of corn to fill the baskets that were dumped in the wagon and then taken to the corncrib. The corn was all cut by hand, shocked and then husked by hand before it was put in the crib for winter. Everyone had a corn sheller, powered by hand, that would shell one ear at a time, which was a slow way to prepare the corn for grinding and feeding the chickens. Horses were fed whole corn, as they could take the kernels off the cobs as they ate. Oats and wheat were cut with a binder, then shocked so it could dry. It was then loaded on wagons and taken to the barn and threshed, which separated the straw from the grain.

At planting time, the ground was usually plowed with horses—each team turning over one furrow at a time as they walked along. Then it was tilled with a spring tooth harrow, usually two or three times, and then smoothed down with a drag, made of three planks of wood, each about eight-feet long. The harrow was used to loosen the ground up and the drag was used to smooth the ground and break up the lumps. Each of these processes helped to kill the weeds that might be starting to grow in the ground. You had to walk behind the harrow and you stood on the drag. Standing on the drag and driving the team was probably any young farmer's first

Picture 10: David Working the Farm Team



Picture 11: Threshing Wheat with Early Tractor (Photo from Penn Panorama)

job, as there wasn't an issue if the team didn't go exactly straight or overlapped a bit.

Once the grain was planted and growing, it was left until it was time to harvest. First, it would be cut with a binder. Although the grain was cut by hand in Eli's time, by Henry's time they had a reaper—a machine that cut the grain and laid it in bundles so it could be tied by hand. By David's time, they also had binders—a machine that cut the grain, tied it in bundles called sheaves, and then put them in a carrier that dropped them in rows for shocking.

Shocking the grain was a large job and one that required considerable skill to do it properly. The purpose was to let the grain stand and dry so it would keep in the granary and not heat or spoil. The wheat had eight sheaves in a shock and two sheaves called "Hudders" put on top to keep the rain out. These hudders were made by holding the butt of the sheaf against your stomach, putting your one arm around the middle and using your other arm to break the stocks a few at a time to make a roof. On the wheat, the head of one hudder was placed facing the north and the other head was placed facing the west. Since most rain storms came with wind out of the north or west, this helped keep the roof from blowing off before the shocks were taken to the barn. The oats were shocked in a similar manner, except you only put six sheaves in a shock and one on top for a hudder.

If a person was careless with his shock creation, the shocks would not stand in a storm. As a result, you either had to re-shock the fallen shocks, or if the rain got in and the grain got wet, the grain was ruined. After a storm, you could always look at a shocked field and see who the good shockers were. When the grain was dried (usually after about two weeks, weather permitting), the threshing started. This process of removing the grain from the stalk required about sixteen people. All of these jobs were man-sized and it was a sign of growing up when the boys were allowed to help out. Usually, the first opportunity was to sit on top of the thresher and guide the stacker (a twelve-inch large pipe) that the straw was blown through. It had a head controlled by three ropes and levers—one that pulled the top back to let the straw go out unimpeded, one that would turn the head to the right and one that would turn the head to the left, just like driving a horse. You had to push on one while you pulled the other. As you can see, harvesting the grain required a community, and Harcrest Farm both benefited and helped those farmers around them who needed laborers.

The original Harcrest Farm barn had a small granary under a part of the hay mow on the north side of the barn. On about 1935, David took that out and built a new granary under the entire hay mow on the south side of the barn floor. A neighbor looked at it and said, "It will hold all the grain in Penn Township!"

As a farmer, David and Dale lived by the weather. As Christians, they refused to work, beyond necessary chores, on Sunday. These often-opposing viewpoints made farming challenging. For example, when it came to making hay, there were three distinct processes that usually took at least a day each. First, you had to mow the field of grasses. If you were lucky, you had a mower/crusher combination, so that when the grass was mown, all the moisture in the leaves was also crushed out of the plants. After the crushed leaves sat on the ground and dried for at least one day, a rake was brought out. The rake turned the hay over so the underside could dry and made the grass into neat rolls. Finally, the baler picked up the row of hay, compressed it into sections, and sectioned it into neat bales, which were moved from the field to the barn on wagons. It was very important that the hay be completely dry. Slightly damp hay, once compressed, either molded and was unfit for use as feed, or worse, heated up and sparked fires that could quickly consume a barn. Straw, the stalks of grain that were used as bedding, were baled in the same fashion and also had to be completely dry.

Unfortunately, in Pennsylvania, it was often hard to get three sunny days in a row. So when the weatherman predicted a sunny weekend, it took a man of faith to trust that the Lord wouldn't provide a sunny Sunday and let the rain come in on Monday to dampen all of the dried hay and straw. David, and then Dale, worked late on Saturdays and got up early on Mondays, but no matter the gloomy Monday forecast, they never worked on a field on a Sunday. God must have smiled at their faith, because they rarely lost a crop, even when they only harvested six days a week.

Picture 13: Dale with Three Registered Belgian Foals

Picture 12: Early Thrasher

Photo from Penn Panorama

Creating a Legacy of Registered Animals

He tends his flock like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. (Isaiah 40:11, NIV)

In 1922, David purchased his first Registered Holstein, a black-and-white heifer that was expecting a calf. This dairy cow was the first registered cow in Butler County. She was a big success and her descendants continued on the farm for the life of the dairy business. When you register a cow, you must name the animal something distinct. It was at this time that the Harcrest Farm name officially came into being. The name was taken from the last name, Hartzell, and the crest referred to the hill across from the farm buildings. At this time, Harcrest Farm consisted of horses, cows, chickens, pigs and a collie dog.

There were typically two opinions of thought about which cattle to purchase. Holsteins, the black and white cows gave more milk and Guernseys, the brown and white cows gave less milk but their milk had a higher butterfat content. The Holstein breeders said since they got more milk, this offset the lower fat content price. The Guernsey breeders claimed they could make more money and not handle as much milk. However, as people started to do less manual labor, they also started demanding less fat in their milk (think skim and 2% milk). As a result, the Guernsey breed diminished and most dairy cattle across America are now Holsteins.

In order to breed your registered cattle, you must have a registered bull; there were no registered Holstein bulls in Butler County. As a result, the Butler County agent helped arrange the "First Butler County Bull Association." This organization was made up of several farmers, of which David was one, that would pool their money and purchase young bulls. Winterthur Farm in Wilmington, Delaware was a leading Holstein farm and several bulls were purchased from there. The Association had very good results with these purchases.

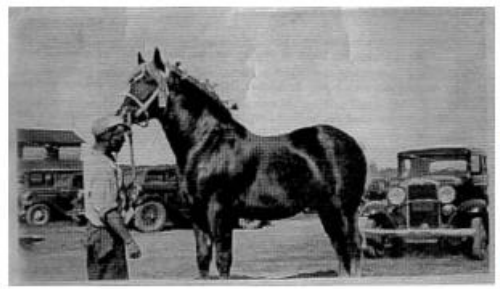
A year later, in 1923, David started testing his cattle with the National Dairy Herd Information Association (DHIA). This organization tracks how much milk each cow produces, along with the butterfat content of the milk. Payment of the milk was based on the pounds of milk received and the butterfat content. At this time, all cows were milked by hand, twice a day.

The first automated vehicle was purchased in 1923, but it was used sparingly; David purchased a 10-20 International tractor on steel wheels. It used kerosene for fuel and it was hard to maneuver. However, it had a pulley, which provided power

for the feed grinder, threshing machine, and ensilage cutter. Horses were used for everything else.

By 1927, David enjoyed his farm's success with registered cows. He then decided to purchased his first registered Belgian horses, full sisters who were three and four years old. These horses came from the state of Indiana and were expensive. His plan was to use the two as a team and also to raise foals for future farm work. Unfortunately, as with the Holstein cow, there were no registered stallions nearby. For several years he transported them to stallions on farms east of Butler and as far away as Erie. They had several foals, but the costs associated with the mare's transport made this arrangement cost inefficient.

As horses were in great demand, David felt if he had his own registered stallion, he could raise more foals. In an effort to purchase a stallion, he finally found one he particularly liked, but as the world was in the middle of a depression, he felt the asking price of $450 was too much. Reluctantly, he went home without making a purchase.

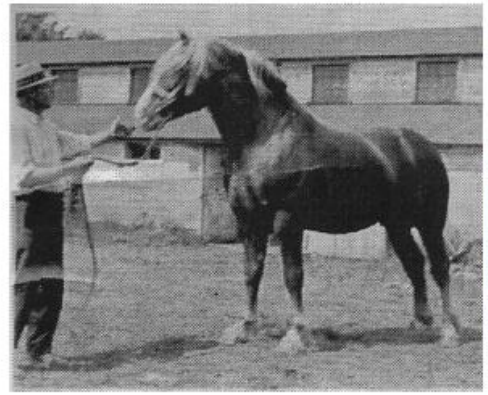


Picture 13: Roger, David's First Registered Belgian Stallion

In January of 1934, the owner of this stallion took him to the Pennsylvania State Fair in Harrisburg. Sure enough, this stallion took first place. When David heard that, he decided to buy him. Unfortunately, this win made owner raise the price to $500! David bit the bullet and purchased this winner, named Roger. This stallion sired many foals and also provided an income when neighbors brought their mares to the farm for breeding. David received between $100 and $120 in breeding fees during the first year that he owned the stallion, as he sired ten to twelve foals (at $10 a foal). Interest in raising horses seemed to generate quite quickly and by the second year, David had around 40 to 50 mares lined up and had to turn people away. His $500 investment now looked pretty excellent, because they also used the horse for work around the farm. When Roger's own foals became old enough to breed, David needed a different stallion so he sold Roger for $900 to a man from Ohio. This one stallion was probably one of David's best horse investments.

Once David had an established horse business, he started showing his horses at the Butler Fair (formerly located at the site of the Butler Senior High School). Dale's earliest memories are of riding on the hay wagon to Butler with his father, with their show horses tied to the back and brought along behind. Other participants

would join in this group and the caravan could reach a dozen or so. Once at the fair, they would show their horses in differing classes (according to age and breed) and generally come home with many ribbons.



Picture 14: Legas, David's Second Stallion

After Roger, David purchased a stallion, named Legas from Hyllmede Farm. This registered Belgian stallion was imported from the country of Belgium. David used him for both farm work and breeding, but it wasn't long after this that the automotive industry hurt the horse market. It took a turn for the worse and never recovered.

In the early 40's, the horses were phased out as the market declined and by the end of World War II, the horses on the farm had declined from around thirteen or fourteen to just one team that was kept for years to do light work around the farm.

The farm did have a few riding horses. In the mid 30's, David boarded a riding horse for a man in Butler. This horse was very quiet and wonderful for David's children to use to learn how to ride. He was very old and he would occasionally trip and fall. Once, when Dale's brother John was riding him, the horse stumbled over a dog and John, the horse and the dog all wound up on the ground. Soon after this, the owners decided they no longer wanted the horse and gave him to David and his children.

David took this horse to a dealer and traded him for a younger horse that had been reared on the western range. This horse was extremely sure-footed and had a tremendous desire to run. On one occasion, a hired hand on the farm wanted to purchase a pack of cigarettes from the store at the Brownsdale road junction, about a mile away. John said, "Give me the exact change so I can lay it down and grab the cigarettes and I'll be back in five minutes." The man handed him the exact change and he took off. He galloped down the road, jumped off the horse, handed the clerk the exact change for the pack, and jumped back on the horse. His time when he pulled into Harcrest Farm? Exactly five minutes!

Picture 15: Bess, the First "Excellent" Cow in Butler County

Picture 16: David Lusk Hartzell

Picture 17: Argus, a Belgian Bred on Harcrest Farm

Picture 18: Herd of Holsteins in Front of Orchard

World War II Era

In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps. The lips of a king speak as an oracle, and his mouth should not betray justice. (Proverbs 16: 9-10)

As late as the mid-1930's nine out of ten rural homes were without electric service. David and Henry milked their cows by hand using the dim light of a kerosene lantern. It took the effort of all the adults, Henry, David and Carrie, to keep wood in place for the wood range and water close to the washboard. The gasoline pump often didn't work in bad weather so water was pumped by hand from wells and carried into the house and barn by the bucketful.

Three troughs were used to cool milk. Each trough could hold four milk cans and the water rose to just below the top of the can before it overflowed into the next trough. The final trough was used as an overflow for the first two and the water was then moved to a trough inside the barn from which the cows and horses would drink. The water was pumped manually and it was the children's job to do the pumping. Each child had to pump a predetermined number of strokes as their turn. Older children would pump more; younger children would have fewer strokes. All of the milk buckets and cans were carried to the house for washing. All that changed when electricity was brought to Harcrest Farm in 1935. Electrical pumps were one of their first purchases. As machinery wore out or broke, it was replaced by new electrical appliances. Mechanized vehicles gradually replaced the use of horses.

Henry passed away in 1935, at about the same time the farm received its first electricity. He was buried in North Union cemetery and the farm passed to David.

Within a year, Brownsdale Road was paved, so the automobiles could be used year around. David now sold produce to the Morningside and East Liberty areas of Pittsburgh, delivering it in one day with his truck. As the automobiles and roads got better, he stared a regular route, run each Friday. Eggs were the main item, but he also did gardening and sold all kinds of vegetables. Sweet corn was planted in certain intervals so that corn could be sold for several weeks. He would also provide chicken, if customers placed an order, and in the fall, he would provide pork sausage. (David continued this route until 1960.) When the Shortline was discontinued, they worked out an arrangement to deliver the cans of milk to the crossroads, where it was picked up by a truck, which then delivered it to Evergreen Dairy.

With the new electricity in place to the house, Hartzells bought their first radio and spent their spare time listening to news and programs. It was nice to be able to get current news instead of waiting for the day-old paper that they received in the mail. Unfortunately, the news contained disturbing rumblings of European discontent.

In 1941 Pearl Harbor was bombed and the US went to war. Farmers were exempt from service, as their labor and products were much needed by the US. Eighteen-year-old Dale stayed at home, milking cows, helping with his dad's market route, and harvesting crops. Soon farms had to meet a strict quota for production. Key food production jobs were marked for deferment, and food production was critical. While Dale stayed home to run the farm, many cousins and relatives joined the military. One of them, Dale's cousin, Robert Edgar, joined the Navy. He was the son of Edna, who was David's sister. He was stationed in San Diego and there he met his future wife, Ruth Augusta. One of Ruth's best friends, Bette Shumway, was a Wave in the Navy, and she was soon to become the future wife of Dale Hartzell.

Picture 19: Bette in her Wave Uniform

Bette was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. When she graduated from High School, after working in a rubber factory for a short time, she decided to join the Navy as a Wave. She was sent to Hunter College in New York for her basic training and then was moved on to Milledgeville College in Georgia. There she took classes in typing and other secretarial tasks. Soon she was shipped out to her final working destination, San Diego, where she worked as a clerk in accounting.

Bette had a charming, vivacious manner and a good sense of humor that often attracted people to her. Patriotism was at a high. Service men and women were honored wherever they went, and a lovely lady from Chicago bought dinner for Bette and treated her nicely on the long train trip across America.

She met and made many friends, and she was known for her beautiful singing voice.

Bette's Anecdotes:

Although rationing didn't affect Bette much, she did find that she often had to pin her undergarments because there was a shortage of elastic. One day, as she was walking across the Naval Station, a large platoon of soldiers was marching by. Just as they passed her, her pin came undone and her underwear slipped down to her feet. The commanding officer, noticing her dilemma, shouted "Eyes Left!" and all the soldiers turned their heads away from her as she grabbed her underwear and ran. Chivalry was not dead in her Navy!

She had the privilege of going aboard one of the Navy vessels, the U.S.S. Matanikau, which was headed to the Pacific and sang at their worship service.

Back on the farm, rationing across the U.S. started almost immediately, beginning with tires, and being closely followed by gasoline, sugar, and shoes. Quotas were set according to need—so much for 'x' number of acres, so much for people in war-related jobs to provide transportation to work, etc. At PTA meetings, Eskimo pies were sold for five cents each.

Five people who worked at Westinghouse Electric would meet at the Harcrest barn at 5:30 a.m. to carpool to Pittsburgh. They left their cars parked at the barn, and picked them up around 5:00 p.m. each evening. This arrangement continued for the entire duration of the war.

The airport was used a training center for pilots during the war. Each morning, a bus from Geneva College filled with pilots would pass the farmhouse and about twenty minutes later, the planes started to fly over the house in a steady stream. They were so close together; it was hard to talk outside and be heard.

Dale and his mother convinced David to purchase a milking machine. This was a single unit, but it milked faster than two people and it never got tired, so two horse stalls were removed and three more cattle stalls were installed, enlarging the milking herd to 15. This was about as large an operation as any in the Butler area at that time. It was around this time that Harcrest Farm began to focus more on milk production and Dale mostly left the market route to his father.

The country was still at war when Dale's mother, Carrie (Maharg) Hartzell died after a long, twelve-year illness from Rheumatoid Arthritis in 1944. She was buried at North Union Presbyterian Church, which she faithfully attended. Not long after that, in April of 1945, Dale purchased the 153 acres of his father's farm (Plot A) from his father. Dale became sole owner of Harcrest Farms, although David continued to use the land for supplying his market route.

The war was declared over in September of 1945, and one month later, Dale purchased the 80 acres of William's original farm that lay directly north of his property and west of Three Degree Road. It had passed through the hands of several families. William had passed away in 1913 and his land was sold to the Pattersons. In 1933, they died within a few days of each other, so the land was rented for six years to the Moniots. When the Moniot family bought a farm in Portersville, the farm was sold to a Pittsburgh man who converted the barn into a large chicken pen where he raised chickens for a restaurant that he owned. Unfortunately, he didn't know much about chickens and it seemed like the majority of the chickens died and his anticipated profit was a very large loss. He then sold the land to the Perozichs, who offered it to Dale when their children didn't show any interest in farming. David thought that 233 acres of land was too much acreage for one young man to work, so he convinced Dale to sell the northernmost 35 acres of

land. With this acquisition, Dale now owned all sixty-five acres that are outlined as the future Harcrest Park.

In order to facilitate his new land acquisition, Dale purchased his first tractor, an Allis-Chalmers, which had a battery and a starter. More importantly, it had rubber wheels, which allowed it to be driven on local roads.

This promising young landowner took a vacation in August and drove to Detroit with his cousin, Bob, and his girlfriend, Ruth. There, he met Bette Shumway, who had mustered out of the Navy in February of 1946 and was once again working in the rubber factory. The two hit it off immediately, and when Ruth and Bob got married, Dale invited Bette to go to the wedding with him. She took a train to Pittsburgh and then she drove to Boston (Ruth's home) with Dale, Bob, and Bob's parents. Dale asked Bette to be his wife on September 13, 1946.

They saw each other once a month; Dale would go to Detroit one month and Bette would travel to Pennsylvania the next. He gave her a diamond ring on Thanksgiving, and it was all calls, letters and that monthly visit that comprised their courtship. They were married, a year to the day they met, on August 26, 1947.

Bette's Anecdotes:
The day of their wedding, Dale's brother John and his brother-in-law went to a Tigers' baseball game so they could see Ted Williams play. Dale's wedding clothes were in their hotel room. The game went into extra innings and they almost missed the wedding, and Dale was almost married in his farmer's togs!

Picture 20: Dale and Bette's Wedding Day, 1947

They had a big formal wedding at Ward Memorial Church. Bette had been very active in her church so there were at least 450 people at the wedding. They honeymooned at Niagara Falls, and visited the Exposition at Toronto. One of the first things Dale did was take Bette to check out the cattle barns. She soon realized that this was a picture of her future life.

The Lynchpin of the Community

Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you…And I will bless you…" (Genesis 12:1-2, NIV)

Dale and Bette got back from their honeymoon the day after Labor Day. Bette was eager to see what this new life would be like. Two days later, she was making dinner for many local farmers and family members because it was time to fill the silos. She had never been on a farm and didn't realize that dairy farming was a seven-day-a-week job with long day's work. But Bette was a hard worker and Dale had chosen his mate well. She pitched in and helped with all the homemaking chores and fed all the workers. She raised a garden and canned and froze vegetables. She also sewed and kept her home spotlessly cleaned.

Picture 21: The Home Dale Built for Bette

After the wedding, Dale and his new wife moved into the brick farmhouse with David and his second wife, Bessie. It was a good arrangement, but Bette enjoyed homemaking and wanted her own home. Immediately after the wedding, Dale started cutting trees from the woods to build a new house, directly west of the farm buildings. With the exception of a few rafters and the floor on the second floor, all of the wood for his home came from the farm. The brick materials and concrete blocks for the house were trucked to the site by Paul Starr. He did not have them in stock at that time, but purchased them in New Castle. Dale provided much of the rough labor and his sister Marion's husband, Ralph Cashdollar, supervised the construction and brought in extra help on Saturdays. The basement, brick, plumbing, and wiring were all contracted out. It was a big job to complete when there were many farming tasks to focus on as well, but they were industrious. Ten months later, on June 1, 1948, they moved into their new house.

Their first child, David Dale Junior (Dave), was born just three months after they finished building their new home. Bette was ecstatic! She had her own family and home now and within two more years, she added another boy, James (Jim) to the family. The importance of boys to a young farmer couldn't be over-emphasized, but Bette wanted a girl. Another two years later, she had her first daughter, Ellen,

with whom she could share her love of home making. By 1958, their family was complete—two boys, David and Jim, and two girls, Ellen and Sarah (Sally).

But one of the biggest changes to Dale's life was that Bette loved to socialize and encouraged Dale to do so as well. It wasn't long before Bette had Dale were involved in a new church, where they met friends and invited them over for dinner. Soon, Bette was involved with the Christian Women's Club of Butler, and Dale was teaching Sunday School and mentoring young men.

Picture 22: A View of Harcrest Farm with Friends

The barn was used as a gathering place for family reunions, square dances, and local 'barn' hockey games that turned quite competitive. Wagons were borrowed for parades and the barn was used to house the wagons while teenagers decorated them with thousands of tissue-paper rosettes. The barnyard was often in use as a baseball or football field.

One evening in 1958, as Dale was milking his cows, one of the Penn Township supervisors stopped at the barn and explained that they were appointing members for a Planning and Zoning Commission and asked Dale to serve. He was initially totally opposed to zoning, as he didn't want anyone telling him how to run his farm. This was the mindset of most farmers because they generally wanted their independence. He declined, but the supervisor persevered and said, "We are going to have zoning in the township, whether you like it or not, because we want the township to be as desirable as possible to the new people. Since your family has been in the township for over 100 years, we would like you to represent the old guard and the rural people." He also indicated that the zoning would follow common sense guidelines, so Dale agreed to serve.

No other township in Butler County had a Planning and Zoning Board (although Butler Township Supervisors had passed a few zoning regulations) so there was no guidance. They hired a firm from Pittsburgh to assist and they made a study of the township. The firm from Pittsburgh did not know of any other rural township in Pennsylvania that had zoning, but they gave them a copy of the Monroeville Planning and Zoning ordinance. While this didn't reflect Penn Township's rural nature, it did help them to get a feel for guidelines.

While the farming community wanted to have their property zoned "Agriculture", it was Dale who believed that the land around the township would be changing and he didn't feel it was necessary to subject farmers to the expense and discretion of the township boards. He insisted that they zone the entire township into Residential, Conservancy and Commercial areas, but include in the ordinance that "Farming or agriculture was permitted in any area", thus permitting farm people to continue in their work. This ensured that if a farmer wanted to sell his land for development or build a house or two for his family, he would not have to get the zoning board to rezone the land. At that time, this was a wise move to protect the farmers of Penn Township. He gained a lot of knowledge in this endeavor, and, unbeknownst to him, gave him critical experience for his future.

BUTLER CLUB DIRECTORS
Seated left to right: J. R. Simpson, state director; David C. Wise, secretary-treasurer; Lee Kummer, president; and Howard L. Halstead, past president. Standing left to right: Dale Hartzell, sales representative and Paul Smith, vice president.

nth of May, 1965

Picture 23: Butler Eagle Publicity

Dale was heavily involved in the Butler County Holstein club, and by 1965 he was serving as one of their officers. He was one of the farmers who helped organize the

"Sale of Stars", an event that would sell cattle from farmers from all over the area and market the sale to a larger audience outside Pennsylvania. This event was hugely popular and drew crowds from the tri-state area. Dale used to enjoy telling the story about the time he overheard a famous cattle judge telling one farmer to purchase Dale's cow because it was the best in the sale.

One of the Butler County Holstein club's long-standing traditions involved Twilight Meetings. At these summer get-togethers, you visited with your neighbors, judged some cows, and consumed homemade ice cream and glazed doughnuts. Along with the food, fun, and friends, the farmers took a few minutes to share their experiences and often learned a few things from their neighbors. Harcrest Farm hosted the annual Twilight meeting the summer of 1968.

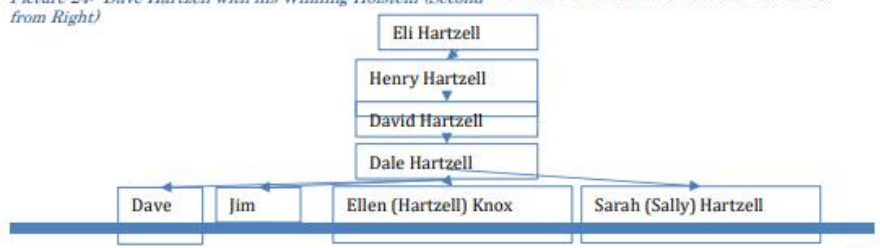
Dale worked particularly hard that summer, painting the barns and fences, cleaning the interior of the barns and whitewashing all of the interior barn walls. By the night of the meeting, the homestead had never looked better. Farming families from all over Butler County came to the farm to look over Dale's cattle. Several mock judging events were held with prizes for those whose entries were the closest to the determination of the professional judges attending. Lots of food and ice cream were consumed and Bette and Dale were happy hosting.

JUNIOR SHOW WINNERS

Displaying their award winning entries in the ...nior Dairy Show conducted at the Butler Farm ...ture Wednesday are, left to right: Nancy Sne... ...g, Renfrew; Connie Rearicks, Mercer Road; Harold Rader, Philip Kennedy, David Hartzell and H. Francis Kennedy, co-leader of the County Dairy Club. Lee Kammer, co-leader with Ken... nedy, is not pictured.

Picture 24: Dave Hartzell with his Winning Holstein (Second from Right)

All four children were involved in Four-H meetings, and they began to show their cattle at local fairs. Dave won several of the events with one of his entries and the local paper, the Butler Eagle, highlighted his success. Jim and Ellen also won at the top of their class and took their animals to regional fairs. In 1971, Ellen's heifer went all the way to the Pennsylvania State Fair and won fifth place. Summertime involved lots of chores, but it also included fun at the farm shows and fairs.



Harcrest Farm Dairy Production and Dispersal

For all the animals of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills." (Psalm 50:10, NIV)

In November of 1955, Evergreen Dairy in Millvale sold their operation to Country Belle. Dale was given a week to join the operation, which would allow them to own stock in the company. After much thought, Dale chose instead to ship milk to Harmony Dairy. This company, however, told their providers that by the end of the next year, they would no longer purchase milk in small amounts, but would begin only bulk handling of milk.

Dale determined to purchase a 300-gallon cooling tank for milk, which was installed in June of 1956. This replaced their previous practice of selling milk in five- and ten-gallon cans. Although their current production was only 75 gallons a day, Dale was thinking ahead to when they would be supplying milk in bulk. Harmony Dairy began picking up their milk soon after the installation.

In 1958, Dale remodeled the main barn once again, by removing the horse stalls and putting in 29 larger stalls for cows. The stalls were equipped with watering cups and a barn cleaner was installed to assist with keeping the stalls clean and comfortable. The back of the barn was enlarged to allow for the cleaning equipment.

With the extra stalls, it was time to expand the milking herd, so Dale purchased four daughters of a very popular sire, Osborndale Ivanhoe, in a sale in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in 1958. This sire went on to become one of the all-time great Holstein sires.

Picture 25: Evidence of Lots of Quality Milk

Each of Dale's cows had a registered name and each one responded to their own name and stall. Queenie, Erma, Penny, Gloria, Fern…it was a full-time job naming

and tracking each cow. They might have been a means of milk production, but each cow was attended to personally.

In 1964, Dale made the expensive and radical move to install a DeLaval pipeline in his barn. To the best of his knowledge, it was the first in Butler County. It was an elaborate grid of glass and metal pipes that used a motor to draw milk from the milking units that were individually attached to the thoroughly cleaned cows' udders. This milk was then transferred into the large electric cooler without being touched by human hands. In order to be safe for human consumption, milk is regulated and Dale's milk was tested every two months. Dale's milk *never* tested unsafe. However, the pipeline milking system improved even his previously acceptable testing levels to the point where the milk was as pure as it could possibly be before the pasteurization process.

Neighbors often dropped by and purchased his unpasteurized or 'raw' milk. They would bring their own containers and there was a small spigot on the bulk tank that allowed for the filling of jars. Dale would fill them for the neighbors and they would pay him in coins, usually ten cents or a quarter, depending on the size of the container. There was a round metal can sitting in the milk house and it held coins so that Dale could give change to the neighbors. Rumor has it, Dale provided this milk to three Beauty Queens and a PGA golfer: Sally Simon's was Miss Pennsylvania; Betsey Day won the Junior Miss pageant, Michelle McDonald was Miss USA! Jim Simons went on to become a PGA golfer. At a stretch, one might say that their success was because of all that good milk they drank growing up!

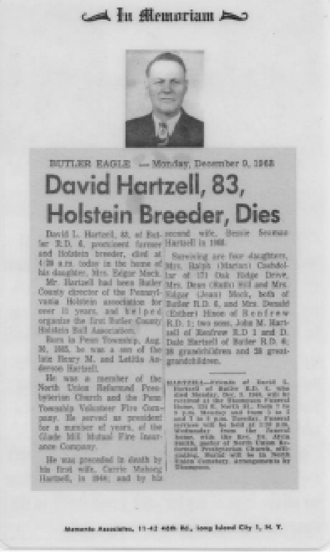
Dale purchased a Border Collie puppy from Missouri and had him shipped to Pennsylvania. He was named Jeff and he became the family's working dog. He was a tremendous help with the cows as he had a natural herding instinct. Before the dog, Dale would send his children out to the fields and they would round up cattle. It was often challenging since the cows didn't always initially want to go in the direction they were supposed to, and it often took all four children to round them up. However, once you got them within hearing distance of the barn, they could hear Dale standing at the gate and yelling, "Sook cows, sook, sook!." Once they heard that, they realized it was time to be fed and milked and they would line up and walk in a fairly straight line into the barn. Once in the barn, each cow would walk to their designated stall and start to eat. Twenty-nine cows always correctly went to their specific stall; they never tried to enter another cow's territory.

After the purchase of the Border Collie, all Dale did was tell him to get the cows and he would run to the field and begin to round up the cattle on his own. It took a while for him to figure out where he was to herd the cattle to, but after he figured it out, it was possible to send him out to get the cattle without supervision. One dog took the place of four children!

Bette's Anecdotes:

Bette often humorously claimed that her husband, Dale, never thought he was wrong. He made the following three dogmatic claims:

- He said they would never land a man on the moon.
- He said that after J.F. Kennedy was elected, the U.S. would never get another Protestant President.
- Finally, he said that although Richard Nixon was a dumb bunny, at least he was honest.


In Memoriam

BUTLER EAGLE — Monday, December 9, 1968

David Hartzell, 83, Holstein Breeder, Dies

At the end of 1968, David Hartzell passed away. He had been the Butler County Director of the Pennsylvania Holstein Association for over 11 years and helped organize the first Butler County Holstein Bull Association. He was a member of the Penn Township Volunteer Fire Company and he served as president for the Glade Mill Mutual Fire Insurance Company. He was buried alongside his first wife at the North Union cemetery.

He was a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, whose pastor, the Reverend Thomas Blair, was married to David's sister, Rebecca.

As the family grew and the surrounding area continued to turn residential, it seemed as if farming was facing an uncertain future. Added to this residential rush, farming was being so mechanized that it would be necessary to expand and expansion would be expensive due to the rising cost of land. As Dale's boys were in college and Dale was in his mid-forties, he had to face the fact that his good help would soon be gone. Other farmers were older and struggling to keep up, and even though Dale enjoyed farming thoroughly, he decided to investigate other forms of employment.

His experience with the Zoning commission helped him to find a new job as a real estate salesman, so Dale decided to go through with the sale of his dairy cattle.

Picture 26: August 31, 1971 - The Harcrest Farm Dispersal

Picture 27: One of the Top Selling Cows - Marsha

On August 31,1971, Dale sold the Holstein herd in a dispersal. Preparations started, on Dale's part, at least a year in advance, but they were on full-fledged by the middle of the summer of 1971. The cows were tested and proved to be eligible for shipping to all states. They were also cleaned up and photographed by a professional photographer. The lineage of each cow was printed up for the dispersal catalog. Of the sixty cattle that were to be sold, 47 were directly descended from the great Holstein sire, Osborndale Ivanhoe and descended from Dale's initial investment. The event was publicized through magazines and shows, and the grounds were prepared for the big day. A large tent was erected to hold the auction.

A week before the sale, Backus Auctioneers sent a man named Ray to help Dale with the many vital preparations. He had a brand new car that was parked in the front driveway and he was housed with the family for the entire week before the auction. On the final night before the sale, all of the cows were tied into the barn to keep them clean, and Dale was understandably worried about fire. At about 4 a.m. in the morning, a knock came pounding on their front door. Dave answered it and Sally heard the word "Fire" and yelled, "The barn's on fire!" Dale and Bette came racing down the steps just in time to hear Dave say, "It's not the barn—it's just Ray's car." Both parents stopped dead in their tracks and started repeating, "It's just Ray's car!" They even started laughing in relief, until Ray came running from his room and howled, "My car!!" Dale and Dave quickly found the fire extinguisher, ran out, and put out the fire, which was in his car's engine.

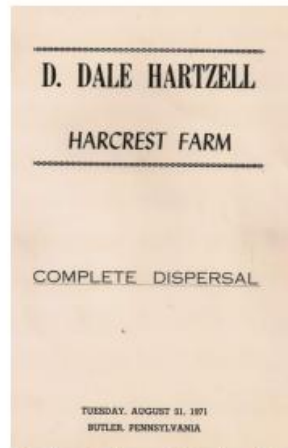
The day of the event dawned sunny and people started arriving early. They parked wherever they could find a spot, so there was a field full of trucks, cars, and trailers, as well as parked cars lining the roads. Lunch was served from a food truck and the auction started at noon. Dale and his boys were very busy getting the cows lined up and ready. It wasn't until Ray stopped him and said, "Dale, you're having a heck of a sale," that the family even realized things were going well. At the final count, Harcrest Farm dispersed cows to over five different states, including Vermont, so their reputation was widespread and their Holsteins were in demand. All of the

cattle were loaded up and taken to their respective homes that very day, except for one, Lucky, who was picked up the next day.

Picture 28: Bidding on Jeff, Dale is in Background

The day of the dispersal, at the very end of the day, the Border Collie, Jeff, was looking lonely. At the spur of the moment, Dale got the idea of putting him into the ring and auctioning him off. Sally entered the ring with the dog and walked him around as several people started bidding on him. In an uncharacteristic puppy-like action, he stopped in the middle of the ring and placed his paw on her leg. She reached down and scratched his ears as the bidding stopped at $75. That was a large amount of money for a dog in those days!

After the sale was completed and the cows were transported to their new homes, sometimes the new owners would write a letter to indicate their pleasure in their purchases. The first letter the Hartzells received was from the Border Collie, Jeff's, new owner telling them how much he loved that dog and how he had transformed the gathering up of his animals. Eventually letters from all over the five states were received, proving that Harcrest Farm animals were loved and appreciated.



Picture 29: Catalog Cover - Sixty Cows Detailed

The Later Years

Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days. (Job 12:12, ESV)

With the sale of the dairy herd and Dale working as a real estate salesman, you might think that his farming days were over. Not so! In order to keep the pastures cleaned and free of shaggy grasses, Dale turned to raising beef cattle.

Picture 30: Three Polled Hereford Heifers

He started off with five unregistered cattle that he kept in Mrs. Ray Timmon's barn. After the sale of his dairy herd, they were moved to the big red barn and it wasn't long before he had a good little herd of non-registered cattle. Sally showed distinct signs of decline every time the farm show came around and complained because she hadn't had as many fun years of showing in 4-H, as had her older siblings. Eventually, Dale relented and provided her with a show calf. Sally was 17 when Dale bought Winston, his first registered Hereford heifer that Sally nicknamed "Winnie". She entered her into both the Butler Fair and the Farm Show and did quite well at both shows.

Dale was a thoughtful and progressive farmer, so it wasn't long before he built up his Hereford herd to about 15 breeding cows. When out to pasture, their red and white bodies looked different from the long-time view of black and white, but it didn't take long before they looked right at home. Each summer, Sally would show between three and seven animals at both the fair and the farm show, and Dale soon

had as good a reputation among the Hereford farmers in the region as he had had with the Holstein farmers.

Picture 31: Chal Helping out with Haying Chores. Picture 32: Sixth Generation Children, Lindsay, Suzie, Chal

In 1976, Dale sold three acres around the original brick farmhouse to his daughter, Ellen and her husband, Chuck Knox. Her three children, Charles Martin III (Chal), Susie and Lindsay, were all raised on the homestead, and Chuck proved to be a big help with the farm work. Chuck and Ellen's children also had the pleasure of spending lots of time on the farm, playing with animals and climbing on haymows. They also rode and drove tractors, working with Dale and learning to be good stewards of the land. They were the sixth direct generation of Hartzell descendants to live on the farm that was started in 1844.

When he no longer had the benefit of family help, Dale leased his farmland out to neighboring farmers. He elected only to put up a few fields of hay for his beef cattle. This went on for several years, and he continued to run beef cattle at the farm until he was about seventy-seven.

But, above all things, Dale was practical and he knew that his farming days were over. In 2002, he made the decision to sell off all of his cattle and then sell the remaining inventory of farming equipment. Again, there was a lot of preparation to get all the equipment cleaned and organized. On Saturday, April 13, 2002, a final auction was performed at Harcrest Farms.

D. DALE HARTZELL
FARM AUCTION
318 BROWNSDALE RD., BUTLER, PA.

****

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2002
STARTING AT 10:30 A.M.

LOCATED: Approx. 8 Mile South Of Butler , Pa OR Approx 10 Miles North Of PA Turnpike On Rt. 8 , Turn West on Brownsdale Rd. Approx. 2 miles to Auction. Watch For Huey Auction Signs.

****

TRACTORS ** FARM EQUIPMENT ** ANTIQUES ** FARM RELATED ITEMS BUILDING ** AND MORE.

TRACTORS: David brown 1200 Selectamatic - Diesel - Org. Rubber - (1 Owner Tractor); AC WD 45 12 Volt - w/ Mted Cultivators & Extra Tire & Wheel;
FARM MACHINERY: Oliver 3 pt 3 x 16" w/ 4th Add on , & Dish Coulters; Case 10' Trans. Disc; Dunham 8' Cultimulcher; 10' Single Cultipacker; Spring & Spiketooth Harrows; IH 56 2 row 3 pt Corn Planter; Poly Tank 3 pt Sprayer; NI #290 9' Mowditioner; NI 401 5 roll Bar Hay Rake; Pequea 710 Hay Tedder; NH 68 Sq. Baler; (2) 16' Flat Hay Wagons; NI 310 1 row Corn Picker; Kilbros Garvity Wagon; NI 26' Hay & Grain Elevator; 20' Bale Elevator; 6" x 16' & 4" x 12' Grain Augers; NI 202 135 Bu. PTO 3 Beater Manure Spreader; Gehl 13" Hammer Mill w/ Feed Rolls; Shelby 2500 LB. Stationary Feed Mixer; Red Cross Model 48 Belt Dr. Corn Sheller; Wagner Hi Lift w/ Bucket & Snow Blade; TroyBilt Horse Rototiller; And More.
TOOLS: Lincoln 225 Amp elec. Welder; 40' Hvy. Duty Alum. Ext Ladder; Pipe Dies; Funnels; Adz; Hand Tools; 60lb Anvil w/ Coal Hardy; 4 Rolls Barbed Wire; 8' Truck Cap For Ford ranger; And More.
* *** BUILDING TO BE REMOVED 20' X 40' DBL DRIVE through CORN CRIB ****
ANTIQUES: Hand Crank Rope making Machine; Grain Cart w/scales; Hay Forks; hay Knife; Grain Cradle; Milk Cans; Pulleys; Scythes; Chicken Feeders; Bu. Measures; And More.

OWNER: D.Dale Hartzell

TERMS: CASH OR CHECK w/ PHOTO ID.
Lunch & Restroom Available.

TRACTORS & MACHINERY STORED INSIDE .
TRACTORS & MACHINERY SOLD APPROX. 12:00 NOON

AUCTIONEERS

JOHN R. HUEY II	SLIPPERY ROCK, PA	SUE ANN WEIDNER
AU-001588-L	(724) 794-4737	AU-001781-L

Picture 33: Flyer from Equipment Dispersal

Picture 34: Antiques are Viewed

Picture 35: Point of Sale Advertising

Picture 36: Bette and Lindsay Looking at Sale Items

The farm was lined with equipment, such as a disc, a cultimulcher, a cultipacker, harrows, corn planters, hay rakes, tedders and balers, grain elevators and augers, and more. Several antiques were auctioned off, such as a hand crank rope making

machine, a grain cart with scales, hay forks, a grain cradle, milk cans, pulleys, scythes, a hand cider press and others. The rope-making machine, which had been in the family since the days of Eli, was purchased by his great-great-granddaughter, Sally. The grain cradle, also used by Eli to such good effect, was purchased by John Hartzell's son, Dwayne.

The dispersal was well attended and many neighbors and farmers came. Interestingly, Amish farmers, who still used similar versions of equipment in their farms today, often purchased the antique items. The previous photos and advertisements show the extent of the sale.

It was the end of a farming chapter, but the beginning for the community.

Picture 37: View of Harcrest Farm on Sale Day

Tragedy & Misfortune

He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:3-4, NIV)

Eli settled on the property in 1844 and by April 24th, his first son was born. I'm sure he and his wife, Eliza, were thrilled to have a baby boy and they named him Abraham. Within four years, they added another baby boy, John Wesley to their home. Children were a gift from God, and male children were a bonus on a farm that would require many workers. Unfortunately, their deaths are recorded in 1849, when the boys were 5 years old and 8 months old, respectively.

Although we don't have record of the cause of death, there was a Cholera epidemic in 1849, so it is possible that they passed away because of that. Bacteria residing in water and food cause Cholera and its symptoms include a mild to moderate upset stomach that led to diarrhea and eventually death. But in 1849, that cause of Cholera was not yet determined, so no one knew how to solve the problem. That was why family members were often afflicted. The parents were both heartbroken at the loss of their children, and Eli consoled his wife. In this age, a farmer needed children to help with farm chores, so it is not surprising that Eliza found herself pregnant again and Henry Madison was born in 1950.

It was only 22 years later that Eliza and Eli passed away within thirteen days of each other on January 9th and January 22nd respectively. It is thought that they passed away from influenza, although some sources say it might have been Typhoid Fever. It was well-documented that in 1873 there was an Influenza epidemic, that was likely begun because of the explosive fatal epizootic that affected poultry, turkeys, ducks and geese during November and December of 1872. (Morens and Taubenberger, 2010). Whatever the cause of the sickness, as a result, Henry had a monumental task in front of him. He rose to the occasion, and there were many decades of prosperity before misfortune struck again.

In 1915, David Hartzell was expecting a good crop of hay, so he erected a hay barn on the property, to the southwest of the main barn. Eight years later, during a storm one evening, lightning struck the hay shed and burned it to the ground. All of the season's hay was lost, but even more importantly, all of the machinery that was stored in the shed. It was a financial loss of large proportions.

We don't know how they tried to put out the fire that destroyed the hay shed. They might have tried to contain the fire by creating a bucket line, or they might have just tried to ensure that the surrounding buildings weren't lost. However, we do know a bit about how fire was handled in this era due to this next story.

Esther and Dale both remembered a fire that occurred around 1931. The farm was still relying on kerosene heaters, as electricity wasn't yet available in the country. Chickens must live in a warm environment to grow properly, so they set up a kerosene heating stove in their chicken pen. One morning, the stove didn't work properly and it suddenly exploded. Their mother thought John was in the building when it exploded and she came running out of the house screaming his name. Fortunately, it transpired that John had left the pen go to the barn to help milk cattle. The fire grew quickly and Esther ran to the side of the pen and opened the small door leading to the yard. Thirty-five chickens came scrambling out.

There was no fire department to call, but the family called neighbors and they all came with buckets. Everyone carried water to the pen from the barn and the back porch where they pumped the water. This concerted effort kept the fire from spreading to the barn. The well at the house went dry, but the well at the barn continued to produce enough water to stop the fire. The fifty-foot pen and many chickens perished, but through the quick-wittedness of Esther, some chickens were saved.

Picture 38: The building to the right is the hay barn and the corn crib is in the middle.

David rebuilt the chicken pen and the hay shed. It seemed as if the hay shed was a cursed building, however. In 1966, around 3:00 a.m., a man was driving down the road and saw a bale of hay on fire in the shed, which was located somewhat close to the road. He got out of his car and tried to put out the fire, but the hay was dry and it quickly got out of control. He jumped back in his car and drove to the red brick farmhouse, where he woke up David and alerted him to the problem.

David quickly called the fire department, and then called Dale at his house, which was about 100 yards from the shed. By that time, the fire was an inferno that melted the electricity and phone wires, so the phone rang a few times, and then cut off.

Hearing the phone ring, Dale jumped out of bed and saw that a fire had turned the sky red. He ran to the window and breathed a quick sigh of thanks because in the reflection of the red sky, he could see his herd of cattle safely lying in pasture outside the main barn and that the main barn was unscathed as well, at this time. Additionally, astonishingly, the fire truck was driving down Three Degree Road with its lights flashing, so he knew help was on its way. He called his family to assist and they all ran towards the barn.

It took several hours to contain the blaze. The corn crib was the closest building to the fire and it had begun to smolder. The firefighters had to hose it down to keep it from igniting. Fortunately, no embers flew up and caused secondary fires, mostly because of the efforts of the firefighters. The fire drew quite a crowd, as neighbors from all around showed up to see if they could help. While walking a safe distance from the fire, Ellen spied two young boys who were laughing and saying that it made quite a nice fire for roasting marshmallows. Later the police thought these boys might have had something to do with the fire, but no one was ever charged.

It later transpired that someone had started another fire that night, and the fire truck was just returning from fighting that blaze when David's call came in. All of the firefighters were volunteers, but since they were already at the station, it took them mere minutes to show up at the Harcrest Farm fire. As a result of the firefighters' quick action, they certainly saved the corn crib, and conceivably could have saved the main barn. The hay shed was never rebuilt.

The last disaster that occurred on Harcrest Farm happened in November of 1970. A neighbor, Richard Murphy lived at the top of the hill across from the barn. He telephoned the main barn while Dale was finishing up his milking and said that he thought a plane had crashed on the farm. He had been in his home and he heard a plane go by without any engine noise. It was dark, but he could see the plane's lights, and then he was sure he had heard the noise of a crash.

Picture 39: Plane Crash in November of 1970

Dale and his daughter, Ellen, ran out toward the fields and the Fire Department was called again. It took a while to determine where the wreckage was situated, as it was pitch dark and there were no lights showing. Richard Murphy began to feel as if he'd cried wolf. However, the plane had gone down further away from the barn than the rescue crew had expected. They eventually discovered the

wreck on the far side of the hollow (about 100 feet west of the current park pavilion).

Dale and Richard were the first on the scene and they removed the pilot and two of his daughters from the plane by cutting out their seatbelts. The ambulance showed up and Ellen was helping one of the daughters, who was unconscious. Somehow, she wound up inside the ambulance with the young girl as they sped her to the Butler Hospital. She prayed for her the entire trip, and it is possible that her prayers were answered, because this young girl was the only survivor from the crash. Her father and older sister had both died instantly. Apparently, they had been travelling south from New England for the Thanksgiving holidays when they run out of gas. They were within sight of the airport, trying to cruise in for a landing, when they clipped a tree and flipped down onto the pasture field.

The wreck of a private plane drew local and regional news. Paul Long from WTAE Channel 4 in Pittsburgh, telephoned the barn and interviewed Dale. Sally picked up the phone and recognized the smooth voice before he even said who was calling. The tragic story aired on the nightly news in Pittsburgh.

Fun and Games on the Farm

The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them. (Proverbs 20:7, NIV)

Bette's Ancedotes:

Bette's sister Rosemary was a favorite of the family. When she came to visit, Bette would bake feasts in her honor. On one visit, after spending hours sitting around, eating all manner of appetizers, main courses and desserts, they got up to leave the table.
Rosemary looked around and exclaimed, "My purse…I don't see my purse. Oh my goodness, do you think I ate it?"

Although farming is serious business and very hard work, there is always time for some fun and games.

Esther recalled that the children invented their own playthings in the 1920s. She wrapped a baby blanket around an ear of corn, using the silk of the ear for hair. They all caught butterflies, climbed trees, played baseball, hopscotch, and "London Bridge is Falling Down." The younger girls dressed up in their older sister's clothes and had style shows. In the winter, the hill across the road was a great place for sled riding. Real toys were rare. (Childhood Memories, Esther Hixon).

Picture 40: Women Playing Croquet on Farm

Dale recalled playing a game called Croquenol. The game board was about the size of a card table and had a quarter-inch indentation in the center the exact size of a checker, with concentric circles around the center like a target. A person would snap the checkers with their forefinger to try to settle the checker into the center for a score of 20 points. The circles around the center scored fifteen, ten and five respectively. The game was played by two pairs of people and the object was to knock the opponent's checkers off the target, while keeping yours on. They also played Checkers and Flinch (a card game similar to 500.) Such games entertained the children during those long winter nights before television.

The neighboring boys would get together with the Hartzell family and hold impromptu baseball and football matches. There was always a ball sitting around the barn. Dale would also play spy (a version of hide and seek) with his children.

They would expend all sorts of energy trying to find a spot in the barn to hide, but after counting down, Dale always knew where the children hid. Apparently, all he needed to do was watch the cow's heads—they were always looking right at a child!

The farming equipment also provided a lot of entertainment for the family and neighboring children. The seed drill was a fun piece of equipment that was used during the spring planting season. Its wheels were about four feet wide with spokes placed at four-inch intervals. In addition, it had this little bench that ran the entire width of it, placed about ten inches off the ground. When one of Dale's children weren't sitting on the drill being driven up and down the field, he would tie their bikes to the back of it so they could ride along without pedaling. Also, he would sometimes let them stand in the wheel, put their feet between the spokes and have their hands clench the upper spokes. Holding on very tightly, the children would try to rotate 360 degrees while Dale drove very slowly. Bette didn't know about this fun trick.

Another interesting piece of equipment was the corn picker, which was about ten feet high. It was fun to try and walk up the paddles (which transported the corn from the picker to the corn wagon) and see if you could reach the very top before the paddles started to move because of your weight. Success was sitting down at the top between the paddles and enjoying the view.

In haying season, there was always a neighboring boy or two that helped out. After working all day in the sun, they would retreat to the milk house, where Dale kept a refrigerator stocked with watermelon and Bette's signature Iced Tea. (We think she came up with the lemonade and iced tea mixture long before Arnold Palmer!) The group would cut and eat huge hunks of watermelon and drink tea while taking a much-needed break. Dale would then challenge a boy (there were always one or two new ones around) to the quarter test. He would have a boy put a funnel in the waistband of his pants and a quarter on his nose. The goal was to try to drop the quarter into the funnel. If the boy did it twice in a row, he got to keep the quarter. After the first try, which might or might not work, when the boy had his nose in the air to try again, Dale would pour a cup of cold water into the funnel.

Being raised in the outdoors has its own pleasures--bare feet wiggling in the green grass, lying on your back watching cloud formations, digging in the little stream for crayfish, cuddling with puppies and kittens, and riding horses and cows. Yes, cows. Sally wanted her first pony so badly; she used to ride Joy, the Holstein cow in the first stall. She didn't get very far on her as she was tied to her station, but the cow allowed her to climb all over her.

Picture 41: Our dog, relaxing on her friend

Sally liked the animals. After the age of five, she was too big to ride on cows, but the family still kept one team of draft horses, Maude and Pearl. Following in her father's footsteps, she would ride on top of the draft horses as they worked, her legs sticking almost straight out, clutching the hame ball on the horse's harness. When they weren't working, the draft horses were standing about in the farmyard. Sally would walk up to Pearl, pull her over to the fence, climb up to the top rung, and then just as she was getting ready to jump on her back, Pearl would amble away. Sally would then climb down the fence and repeat the process. It usually ended in one of two ways—she would eventually make it on top of Pearl, but she couldn't get her to move so she would get bored, or Pearl would accidentally nip her toes as she moved so Sally went bawling to Dale. She had a lot of nipped toes and bruised knees.

In spite of the fact that Dale refused to work on Sunday, he still spent time to create fun for his children, even as he toiled. For years, Dale made tunnels through his straw mows. These tunnels were incredibly intricate and lengthy, beginning at about waist height and wending their way through the entire mow and ending up at the top, approximately thirty-feet high. The tunnel itself was about 2'x2' and part way through, it often had a small room (about 5'x5') where you could stop and catch your breath. One version Sally particularly remembered had the small room up against the outside wall of the barn and she would often take a book into the tunnel and then stop in the small room and read the afternoon away.

On the other hand, most of the tunnels were pitch black, so the first time through it was an incredible challenge to find your way. You would start off entering the hole and crawl on your hands and knees until you hit a solid wall of straw. Then you would feel around with your hands to see if the tunnel went left or right. Sometimes it turned upward, but the surprising ones were when it suddenly dropped down! You were climbing along and the floor just disappeared! If you wanted to cheat, you could take a flashlight through with you the first time, until you memorized the twists and turns.

In addition to the tunnels, the Hartzell children also had fortresses made with hay and straw bales that they bombarded with string balls. (Think indoor snowball fights.) Since the bales were put together with binder twine, there was always lots

of string around. Sally remembers climbing the mows and walking along the beams of the barn…about 25 feet off the ground. It was all intrepid fun.

Picture 42: A picture of the fork that the Hartzell children would ride

One fun, but rather dangerous experience that Dale allowed his older children to do, was to ride the fork. Early in the farming days, before the baler, the hay was collected loose on the wagon. In order to get it from the wagon to the haymow, a large fork descended down from a pulley at the ridgeline of the barn. It stuck into the hay, collected a large swatch, retracted up to the top of the barn, travelled along the length of the roof until it got to the haymow at the back of the barn, and then the fork would drop the swatch into the mow. Once there was sufficient hay in the mow to make a great soft landing pad, Dale separately allowed Dave, Jim, and Ellen to hang on to the fork, shoot into the air to the top of the barn, ride along the length of the barn on the hay, and then drop, about 20 feet, down into the soft hay. They did this for years, until Ellen scratched her leg on one of the fork tines, and Dale was worried about tetanus. She remembers that he patched up her scratch saying, "Don't you dare tell your mother about this!" They stopped handling loose hay around 1964, so that form of entertainment phased out, thankfully before there was any real injury!

Around 1966, Bette invited Sally's Girl Scout troop to the farm. They were treated to a tour of the farm, going on a hayride all around the land that is now Harcrest Park. The highlight of the visit was their experience with the hay tunnel. For years afterward, her friends remembered the fun of travelling through the tunnel, and would sometimes bring it up in conversation. Harcrest Farm was always open for fun.

Picture 43: Arrowheads from the Ron Minto Collection

The Changing Landscape

> *There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot… (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, NIV)*

According to the county records, before the late 1700s, land in Western Pennsylvania was Indian Territory. Bands of Delaware and Shawnee hunted the land and fished the rivers. (Butler Eagle, 1976). Indians made their arrow and spear heads out of the flint rock that was indigenous to this area and arrowheads of many sizes were found on the land that Eli Hartzell purchased from White's and McCandless's.

The arrowheads were mostly found following the working of the land in the spring. First, the land would be plowed and the earth would be turned over, usually to a depth of about eight to ten inches. It was particularly good hunting if a rain came along right after plowing, as it washed the stones and made them easier to find. Many of the Hartzell relatives and friends would come and walk the fields, looking for Indian relics. Since the arrowheads were generally made out of a shiny flint stone, they showed up fairly easily against the rich, brown earth. The pictures on the previous page show the arrowhead collection of Ron Minto, a friend who found these on Harcrest Farm land.

In 1945, Dale bought the property that completed Harcrest Farm. At that time, the farm was at its peak size, 233 acres. However, he almost immediately sold 35 acres, to bring the property to 198 acres. The following is a list of people who joined the Harcrest Community by purchasing land from the farm, the year that they joined, and the approximate number of acres that they received:

- 1946 -- One acre was given to Dale's sister, Ruth Hill, and she built her home on Three Degree Road. This is part of the property now owned by Grayson Hixon.
- 1948 – Dale returned 8 acres to his father as a gift and the top of the hill was sold to the Douthetts.
- 1968 – Eleven acres was sold to Roy Greenawalt along Three Degree Road.
- 1971 – One corner of the crossroads to the northeast, 5.1 acres, was sold to Bill Roush.
- 1972 – Ten acres were sold to Paul Curry.
- 1976 – Three acres and the original brick farmhouse were sold to Chuck and Ellen Knox. (Ellen is the daughter of Dale Hartzell and she raised three children, Chal, Susie, and Lindsay, on the homestead. These children also learned to play and climb on haymows and learn to be good stewards of the

land, while being the sixth generation of Hartzell descendants to live on the farm.)

- 1983 – 7 acres and the orchard area of the original farm was sold and split between the Sater's and the Musko's.
- 1988 – Dale bequeathed 75 acres to his children, Dave, Jim, Ellen, and Sally.
- 1992 – 9.5 acres just north of the top of the hill were sold to Frazer's.
- 2001 – Craig and Beth Thomasmeyer and the Carr family purchased 17.5 acres.
- 2007 – Dale and Bette subdivided the residence that they built at the beginning of their marriage from the rest of the farm.

In 2007, Dale, at 84 years-of-age, was driving his blue, Ferguson tractor—a small, easily maneuverable vehicle. He used this tractor for mowing around the big red barn and its several outbuildings and fences. He always liked to maintain the property and he mowed it regularly.

A cousin, Irvin Peffer, was driving by and stopped to chat. Dale was friendly, and although a hard and industrious worker, he could spare some time to talk with his neighbors and relatives and make them smile. After discussing the crops and weather, (always important to a farmer), Irvin remarked that Dale always took good care of his property. "It looks like a park", he said. "You always have it mowed nice and it's one of the prettiest places in the township."

It didn't take long for the idea to percolate. Dale and Bette had retired and were doing some hard thinking about what to do with their family farm. Harcrest Farm had been in his family since 1844 and was designated as a Century Farm by the state of Pennsylvania. But the days of passing a farm from father to son had faded. Land was expensive and most young boys didn't want to commit to the long hours on which farming was based. Dale and Bette's oldest son, Dave, had become an Optometrist with a practice in Saxonburg and their younger son, Jim, had become a lawyer and lived in Poland. Ellen lived in the main farmhouse and her husband, Chuck, helped out, but they had no desire to maintain an entire farm. Now it was time to move, and neither Dale nor Bette wished to have a suburban sprawl of houses on their heritage farm.

Dale approached the Penn Township Board of Supervisors about purchasing the property and using it as a park. They were happy with the idea—several townships around Penn had parks and the land was situated in a good area. Soon the deal was completed. In 2007, Dale sold the remaining 48 acres of Harcrest Farm to Penn Township, for the purpose of creating a township park. It was his request that the Township name the park Harcrest, after the farm on which it had been located.

The red barn that had been the centerpiece of the farm, fell into disrepair. In 2015, it was dismantled and a new building was erected on the site. One beam of the barn was taken to the home of James Mahan and converted to a fireplace mantle. He had met his wife at a square dance that was held at the barn back in the 1970s. Larry Townsend, a young man who had lived for years in the neighborhood and was friends with Dave, created several picture frames using barn boards for the Hartzell family members.

Penn Township soon invested in the property, building a beautiful park on the lands that had previously been tilled and farmed. To finish the story out, in 2021, Marc and Sarah Giamporcaro (Sally Hartzell) sold the property that Dale had given them (almost 18 acres along the western and northern border of the original 48 acres of Harcrest Park) to Penn Township to for future park expansion. Harcrest Farm, renamed Harcrest Park, is now available for all of the community to enjoy, for all future generations.

Picture 44: Approximate boundaries of Harcrest Park

Harcrest Farm & Park in the News

A faithful person will be richly blessed… (Proverbs 28:20, NIV)

For a family farm in Western Pennsylvania, Harcrest Farm had a widespread influence. It was featured in local and national newspapers, highlighting their animals, their picturesque barns, and the family. After it was sold to the Township, the Butler Eagle followed the Park's progress as well.

The Earliest Mention

October 9, 1954: David L. is featured in the magazine, "The Pennsylvania Farmer" and shows a picture of him using his team of Belgian horses to rake hay.

Uses Horses

HORSES are not yet outmoded on the D. L. Hartzell farm in Butler county. They are used to haul manure, cultivate crops and make hay. In the picture above are Mr. Hartzell and a pair of Belgians making hay.

New farm equipment is brought into the Hartzell operation as it justifies its cost, but older equipment is kept in use as long as it is serviceable and economical. With son Dale on the home place, a son and a son-in-law on farms close by, it is convenient and economical to trade work and thus keep down overhead in equipment. Such labor trading makes older equipment still economical where it would be unthinkable and impossible to use in a strictly one-man or two-man operation.

Among the practices, in addition to use of horses, still prevailing in this farming team are threshing of small grains, putting up loose, long hay and others. The methods used on this farm by no means hindered efficient production, as DHIA records of the Hartzells prove. For a number of years at or near the top of their association, their 1953-54 figures on their Holstein herd, Dale says, were an average of 13,355 pounds of milk and 669.6 pounds of fat, with an official return over feed costs of $457 per cow. N. F. R.

D. L. Hartzell rakes hay with Belgians on his Butler county farm.

National Attention

In the spring of 1956, Dale was out planting corn with his team of Belgian horses. A photographer with the Associated Press stopped by and set up the following picture. While the spring flowers were real, he attached the bird to the branch to

add some interest. This picture was broadcast through the Associated Press and showed up across America in newspapers such as the St. Louis Tribune and the New York Daily News.

Monday, May 28, 1956 St. Petersburg Times—3

SPRING IN PENNSYLVANIA

(AP Wirephoto)

Old Man Robin, carefree as a spring morning, watches corn-planting from perch in blossoming crab apple tree on farm near Butler, Pa. Associated Press photographer Walter F. Stein caught the seasonal spirit of spring in the East in this shot.

Never Met a Stranger

Bette Hartzell was known for her hospitality. Raised in Detroit, Michigan, she adapted to farm life with a cheerful outlook that she shared with those around her. She would frequently invite people that she'd just met to visit her at the farm, and there she shared her vision of farm life. One day, she met a journalist from the Pittsburgh Press, who in turn shared her city-to-country story with Western Pennsylvania.

Here is a picture of the article that appeared in the June 2, 1963 issue of that newspaper.


Modern
Farm Wife

The entire article reads as follows:

Modern Farm Wife
By Margaret Carlin
Press Staff Writer

It was September and harvest time when Mrs. Dale Hartzell came as a bride to her husband's family farm near Butler.

This isn't too startling except that the city bred bride almost went home to mother that very first day.

The crisis came when fifteen hungry farmhands trooped into the kitchen.

"They expected lunch. I took one look—went upstairs and cried," she recalls with a laugh. "I just got panicky and Dale had to take over. It was awful."

Now—of course, those days are but a memory.

Today—Mrs. Hartzell is a good example of the modern American farm wife—a knowledgeable attractive woman who is her husband's invaluable farm secretary-treasurer, besides being a good wife and mother to the four Hartzell youngsters.

Her world definitely is not bounded by the farm fence. She's active in club, civic and church activities, a lively out-going person who feels lucky in being able to enjoy farm life with a healthy dash of city sophistication.

The Hartzells own a 187-acre dairy farm with a herd of 51 Holsteins. The couple first met when Dale was visiting friends in Detroit, Mrs. Hartzell's home town. Friends introduced the nice young farmer to Bette Shumway, who was on leave from the Waves.

Bette is the daughter of an attorney, and 16 years ago, the only thing she knew about a farm was that corn, cows and wheat grew there, and farmers got up early. All these things remain true, and lots more besides.

Her Tame Piglet

"One special time I can remember," she says, "is the time we had to take in a cast-off baby pig. Now never in my life could I imagine it…but we brought that pig into our basement, and I fed it with a baby bottle. It got as tame as a puppy. My mother wouldn't believe it."

Another incident which amuses her now happened when she was expecting her second child. The time had come – and she and Dale were ready to dash to the hospital.

"But can you imagine," she recalls with a grin. "It was after midnight and he tucked me into the car and then went racing off to the barn.

"When he came back, he said he was checking on one of his prize cows who was expecting a calf any time—and he was worried. From that time on—I knew I had arrived as a farmer's wife."

Of course, Mrs. Hartzell realizes that when you have a barn full of valuable registered stock—you do get sensitive about their health. Mr. Hartzell has learned to handle simple veterinary chores such as shots and vitamins supplements, and his wife comments:

"Many a night I find myself in the barn, holding a sick cow's head while Dale gives her medicine. I never thought I could get attached to a cow—but you can get to like them."

She also stoutly defends the bovine mentality. She says:

"When our cows are brought in from pasture, each one goes into its own stall. And we have 24 milking stalls--they never get mixed up."

She also fires a little salvo at people who think farmers aren't too smart.

"There are some who think farmers stay on the farm because they are not bright enough to do anything else. But let me tell you—it is a job to make a farm pay today—what with the new machinery, fertilizers, seeds, insecticides, medicines, and all the competition."

She does agree that a farm family has to love the life to stay. The hours are long—the day begins for the Hartzells about 5:30 a.m. and Mr. Hartzell leaves the barn at the end of his working day about 8:30 p.m.

Mrs. Hartzell can vouch for the old saying that the farmer's work is never done. The demands are especially constant when you work with animals, she says. The feeding, cleaning, milking schedule remains a continuous project.

Even during the winter, there remain chores—the machinery to repair, farm buildings, fences, and inside work to be done. Of course—with spring—the tempo on the farm quickens. The Hartzells raise all the feed for the animals—corn, oats, wheat, barley, hay, silage.

Mrs. Hartzell, who tries to limit her outside chores to her vegetable and flower gardens occasionally helps her husband on the tractor or sowing clover—but she stresses the word 'occasionally.' She adds:

Full Time Job

"An older farm wife gave me some advice: 'Never begin anything you don't plan to continue. If you start helping in the barn—pretty soon it will become an accepted

thing and you'll be an 'extra hand.' You will have plenty to do running a house—so be a wife—not a fieldhand.'"

So Mrs. Hartzell is a wife. She has days she hates "like when we render lard all day—the smell is awful" but on the other hand, she loves canning time—when she "puts up" as many as 100 pints of fresh corn in one day.

She always cans or freezes enough vegetables to last the family through the winter.

She relaxes by sewing (she is an expert tailor), cooking (she has won prizes for pies and cakes at the Butler County Fair) and hiking (through the woods on the farm).

She is active in the local Republican Women's Club, the First Baptist Church choir and Sunday School, fund drives and the 4-H Club. She and her husband both work in the Butler County Holstein Association.

The Hartzells feel lucky to be able to raise their children (David, 14, Jimmy, 12, Ellen, 10 and Sally, 5) with the advantages of both city and country.

Will their sons continue the family farming tradition? Mrs. Hartzell says:

"We want them to go to college so they'll be aware of other careers at least. But if they decide on farming, that will be fine with us."

They agree that life is good on the farm.

(This ends the article.)

A First

In late sixties, the Butler Eagle transitioned from a black and white newspaper to a color newspaper. The very first color picture highlighted Harcrest Farm and was printed on June 6, 1967.

—Butler Eagle Photo

SPRING IN THE COUNTRY—A picture of serene-ness was the D. Dale Hartzell farm on Brownsdale Road in Penn Township when the Eagle photo-grapher happened by. The scene is repeated daily in many parts of Butler County as spring has added her touchup brush to the landscape and, after a late start, the trees have burst forth with all their summer splendor. New colts and calves add to the setting on many farms, attracting the city dweller to ever increasing Sunday drives along the rural roadways.

Harcrest Farm came in second place in the DHIA records and they used Farm Bureau feed. This advertisement came out highlighting them:


FARM BUREAU MIRROR

Butler County
D.H.I.A.

1ST PLACE—Lee Stepp, Sarver,
Says: "I use Farm Bureau Dairy Feeds bec
I get more production for less cost. Three indi
ual cows produced over 600 lbs. fat."

According to the Records...

two of the top
Producers Use
Farm Bureau
DAIRY FEED

2nd PLACE — Dale Hartzell, Butler, Pa.
Says: "We have relied on Farm Bureau Feeds for 16
years to help maintain our 12 year average of 12,521 lbs.
milk and 463.3 lbs. fat with 3.78% test, milking twice daily."
Two cows in the herd have over 4000 lbs. fat as 8 year olds,
four have over 5000 lbs. fat as 11 year olds.

'll Be Glad You Switched

HIGHEST PRODUCING BROWN SWISS H
OWNER, Francis Kennedy, Valencia,
Says: "I feel we get more for our money with Farm
Feeds. I have been a Farm Bureau [illegible]

In The News

Here are two of articles that featured the Hartzell family in their day-to-day life on the farm. The articles are not dated, but are generally believed to have been printed in the Butler Eagle between 1960 and 1969.

4-H CAMP ACTIVITIES

Camp adds Friends to the Hands-Head-Heart-Health of the 4-H Club pledge, girls from Butler County learned this week at Camp Deer Head, Evans City R.D. 2. Shown above with the flag symbolic of their creed, are Debbie Hilbert, Chicora; Nancy Edgar, Renfrew R.D. 1; and Ellen Hartzell, Butler R.D. 6, left to right in the order named. Outdoor activities include Nature Study, illustrated below by Cindy Rhinard, Butler R.D. 6; Fay Hamilton, Butler R.D. 1; and Kay Ellen Crotts, Slippery Rock R.D. 4, in the usual order.

EXCELLENT COW—D. Dale Hartzell, Butler R.D. 6, left, holds one of his top Holsteins, Rosa, after she was classified "excellent" last Friday. Clyde Wilson, Holstein classifier, made the judgment at a demonstration of new classification procedures at the Hartzell farm. Classification ranks an animal in comparison with the breed accepted ideal.

—Extension Photo

Harcrest Park

Since Dale sold the remaining acreage of Harcrest Farm to Penn Township, the newly created "Harcrest Park" has been in the news. Here is one of the first articles to come out on November 6, 2009.

Park

■ From Page 1

township wanted to see developed," said Jim Feath, a landscape architect with HRG Engineers and project manager for the park.

The final plan is the next step for a park that is part of Butler's Multi-Municipal Plan, which includes the creation of parks in several municipalities.

Harcrest Park will have 47.5 acres. Its final plan includes multiple trail types, from hiking and bicycling to walking; picnic shelters; playgrounds; basketball courts, and a sledding area.

Also included are a pair of level, multiuse lawn areas; a sand volleyball court; a one-acre man-made pond; horseshoe pits, and a "multigenerational playscape."

The playscape would include play equipment for all ages, from toddlers to adolescents, and even exercise equipment for adults.

The area is mostly fields, with some forested areas, bisected north-to-south by a stream and a second stream running east to west along its northern border.

Feath and Jim Watenpool, a parks and recreation professional, presented with the plan a six-phase construction schedule.

The first phase, which includes parking areas, several trails, restrooms, a playground and infrastructure items such as electrical hookup, sewage and stormwater management, is the priciest at $1.18 million.

Its development is planned for fall 2010, based upon funds becoming available.

HRG and the township intend to apply next April for a state Department of Natural Resources matching grant, and they hope to get funds to match the state's contribution by fundraising and donations.

Watenpool said the park plan is a long-term one that is likely to be completed over two decades at a total cost of about $3.8 million.

That cost could be offset, however, by community donations of cash, volunteer labor and materials.

Engineers show plans for Penn park

Trails, playgrounds, shelters will be part of 47.5 acre site

By ED BILLER
Eagle Staff Writer

PENN TWP — Dale Hartzell sold land at the corner of Brownsdale and Three Degree roads to the township in 2007 for a park, and he still cares what happens to it.

The home he was born in is still there, the centerpiece of a Butler County Century Farm operated by his family since 1844. His daughter and her husband still live on the property.

"I don't want to see it all become housing," Hartzell said. "We had more than 200 open acres there at one time."

Hartzell was one of about 30 people in attendance Thursday when HRG Engineers presented its final plan for the park at the corner of Brownsdale and Three Degree Roads to township officials.

The park will be named Harcrest Park after the dairy farm operated there by the Hartzells.

The plan is based on four concept drawings presented to residents at an April 30 meeting, as well as feedback from questionnaires mailed to township residents this year.

"It was through that survey that we were able to see what facilities the citizens of this

Picture 45: Dale and Bette celebrating Harcrest Park

Further Developments

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV)

In the summer of 2010, the following master plan was displayed in the Penn Township News.

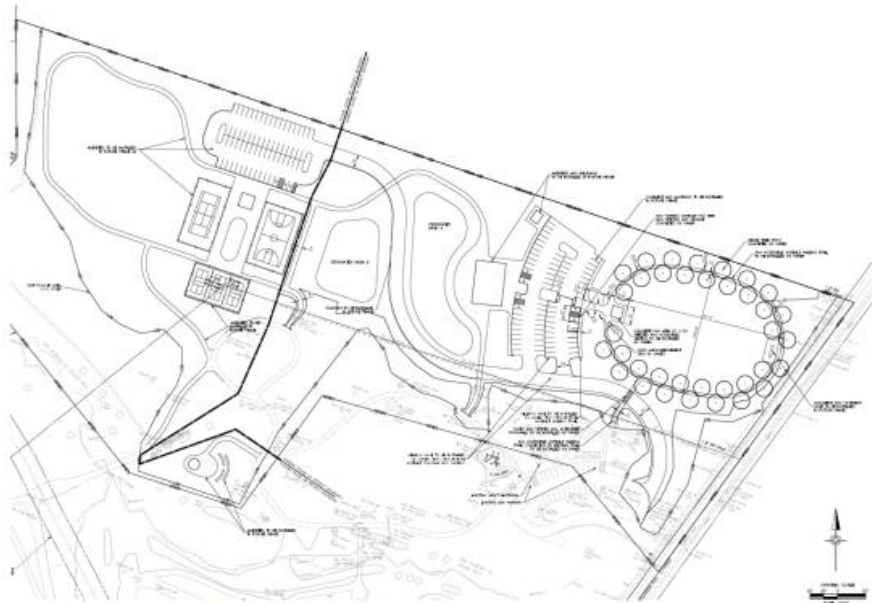
Picture 46: Spring, Summer 2010: Five Phase Master Plan

The diagram on the previous page shows the final phase of the original Harcrest Farm purchase. During the past fifteen years, much of the land to the north has been completed. A pavilion, gazebo, and playground are completed.

Picture 47: New Signage for Harcrest Community Park

Picture 48: A Fun Playground for Families

Since this work has been completed, the Township purchased an additional 17+ acres adjoining Harcrest Park. The following survey shows how the Master Plan has been adapted to include several features that will be located on this new land.



Picture 49: Survey of New Land Purchase

This new purchase will allow for additional walking trails, parking, a Shade Shelter and several sporting venues, i.e. basketball and pickleball courts.

Work has already begun on Phase 2A, thanks to the following grants:

- Butler County Parks and Recreation Park Renovation 2025 Program
- Community Conservation Partnerships Program (administered by DCNR)
- Local Share Account
- Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program
- Butler County Community Development Grant
- Butler County Parks and Recreation Park Renovation 2024 Program

Picture 50: Work on Phase 2A Begins

It is an exciting time to be a resident of Penn Township!

Appendix A: A Brief History of the Hartzell Lineage

For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. (Psalm 100:5, NIV)

The Hartzell family is of Swiss origin. The name itself comes from the small mountain village of Hirzel located about 19 miles south of Zurich, Switzerland. The name has evolved from Hirzel to Hirtzel, Herzel, Hertsell and, finally, Hartzell. Their earliest known ancestor is Fnu Hirzel, who settled in the Pfaffikon Parish, about 22 kilometers northeast of the town of Hirzel. He had three boys and three girls and his oldest boy is the child from which the Hartzell family has descended.

It is impossible to discuss the history of the Hartzell's without briefly discussing some church and spiritual history. In 1519, Ulrich Zwingli, a contemporary of Martin Luther, introduced the reformation to Zurich, Switzerland. He opposed the power, practices, and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, and eventually his beliefs became known as Reformed theology. Another theologian, John Calvin (1509-1564), preached in Switzerland around 1536, and he believed in God's absolute sovereignty in the salvation of the human soul from death and eternal peril.

Fnu Hirzel must have heard the message of Zwingli and Calvin and believed in their spiritual beliefs. His oldest son, Jacob, was baptized in 1581 and at the age of 21, Jacob married Madalen Keller in the Pfaffikon Parish (1601). They had ten children, of which Heinrich was one. Following Jacob's example, they were all christened in the faith.

As a result of the Thirty Years War, which began in 1618, Germany was desolated. More than half of the people were killed and two-thirds of the property was destroyed. Whole villages had disappeared. The Elector of the Palatinate sent a proclamation to the cantons of Switzerland saying that he would allow the immigration of one thousand Swiss families into southern Germany. The excitement that gripped the Swiss farmers was understandable. The German Palatinate was not far away and there was a quantity of good fertile flat land that was vacant (A Book of Life, G.T. Hartzell, 1977). Heinrich, along with his wife, Maria and Heinrich's older brother Felix, emigrated to Reihen, Kries Sinsheim, Baden, the Palatinate.

There, Heinrich and Maria have children and their first boy is named Clemens, for his godfather, Rev. Clemens Hirzel, the Pastor of the Reihen Evangelist (Reformed) Kirche. This pastor emigrated from Winterthur, north of Pfaffikon, and indeed may have headed the emigration from that area of Switzerland to Reihen.

The family changed the name to Hirtzel after they immigrated to The Palatinate, possibly to ensure the continued sound of the "tz" implicit in the "z" of the Swiss dialect.

In 1680, Clemens married Anna Sinter, a native of Reihen. She was a midwife when she got married, and she continued this occupation throughout her life. Together the farmer and the midwife had ten children, two of which were George and Ulrich. By 1727, the Reihen area that had looked so promising, suffered greatly from war. The French invaded, then later, the English, Danes, Prussians and Germans. All of these countries were alternately housed and provisioned from the Reihen area. One army and then the other would occupy the district as the war efforts shifted the armies. As a result, immigrating to America must have looked like moving to the Promised Land.

In 1727, Ulrich Hirtzel departed for America at the age of 22. He traveled down the Neckar River and up the Rhein to get to Rotterdam. This ship sailed from Rotterdam in Holland because the Dutch were hospitable to their German co-religionists. The sea captain was William Hill and the ship bore the English name of William and Sarah. On this particular voyage, the ship stopped at the southeast tip of England at Dover and received clearance papers from the custom officer there. After a voyage of between two and a half to three months, they landed in Philadelphia. The captain was required to state that no criminals were aboard and then named each of the family heads on a list, which was submitted to the colonial authorities. This process for listing immigrants was known as "qualifying". After an immigrant spent the required number of years in America and showed evidence of taking communion, he could take the oath of allegiance and become a citizen. (A Book of Life, G.T. Hartzell, 1977).

The records of the ship's captain's logs stated "Has Jer Herzels – 4 persons" (referring to his older brother George, his wife, and children), and "Ulrick Hertsell, Skipach – 2 persons". This notation indicates that Ulrich had previously been in Skippack (in what is now Montgomery County) and he was returning to this country after a visit back to the Palatinate. This was likely an example of the common practice where a young, unmarried son of the family would scout out land and then return to the homeland to report his findings, take a wife (as did Ulrich) and guide the rest of the family to the new country. The second person in Ulrich's party was undoubtedly, his wife, Anna Margaret Lnu. (There is no record of their marriage date.)

In America, the English-speaking clerks had trouble with the German names of the immigrants and they spelled a name like it sounded to them in English. Phonetically the first "e" in Herzel has a long "a" sound in English and it was only a question of time until their English-speaking neighbors converted their name to Hartzell.

Ulrich settled in Lower Salford Township, as evidenced by his signature as a witness in a land transaction. He received a warrant from the Proprietaries of the Province for a tract of 150 acres in Upper Salford Township "to pay quitrent of half penny Sterling yearly per acre." On Patent number 297, his name is spelled Hartzell for the first time. He and his wife Anna Margaret had eight children, of which one is Jacob, born in 1734. Carrying forth the importance of their spiritual beliefs, Jacob was confirmed at Weiss's Goshenhoppen Church.

Jacob and his wife, Catherine, had seven children, the youngest of which was named Jonas. Although Jonas was born in Bucks County, PA and lived there until he was older, he both farmed and learned the wagon maker's trade. He married a woman named Mary Housekeeper, and he had five children. At some point in his early adult life, he moved to Harmony in Butler County and lived in that village for about 8 years where he engaged in the occupation of making and selling wagons.

Wagons were in big demand as they were the predominant means of transportation. He worked hard and transformed logs of wood into thin spokes for the wagon's wheels using a tool called a spoke shaver. When he had saved enough money, he then bought a farm in Jackson Township, where the remainder of his life was lived out. He was a member of the Lutheran Church and attended faithfully. His sons Eli (1819) and Jacob were born in Jackson Township.

Index of Pictures

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