



The Gretna Chronicles NEWSLETTER



Spring Edition 2009

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By Fred Buch

This summer marks the Fifth Anniversary of the Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society (MGAHS) and the second year of our headquarters, archive and museum building. The membership has exceeded the 500 mark and our goal is to add another 100 members this year. We would appreciate your help. Give a gift membership and encourage friends to join.

Members continue to donate numerous artifacts and documents for the Historical Society collection. Do you have

documents or artifacts that you wish to donate? Contact us at our website or museum. As part of the new display in the museum this year, we will include the items that were donated during the past year. The museum will be open every Sunday in May from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. The NEW displays will be added during the early summer months. The new displays will reflect the topics of our Friday evening programs.

This year the Historical Society will be operating the Visitor Center near the Jigger Shop and the gift shop and we will have a small artifact display. DVDs, books and decals will be offered for sale at that location. The display will hopefully encourage people to visit the main museum.

You will not want to miss our Friday evening

program series. Beginning with a program on cottage restoration on Friday June 5 and followed by a Saturday vendor show from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM presented by the MGAHS Architectural Preservation Advisory. Look for the remainder of the program details elsewhere in this newsletter issue. The major theme of our programs will be "Where It All Began" featuring the area north of Route 117. A few naive individuals think that area is not a part of Mt. Gretna. Don't you believe it. That is the first place to be named "Mt. Gretna."

We want to furnish the two bedrooms in the museum this summer. The items must have

been used in Mount Gretna cottages during its early founding years. Since the bedrooms are very small, the furniture must be small in scale. Specific items of furniture needed are two wood beds, one dresser or chest of drawers, small tables, a chair and selective small decorative items. If you have any of these pieces to donate or loan for the exhibit, contact Fred Buch at 1-800-242-3901 and a member of the Museum Committee will visit your cottage to determine if the items will

work for the limited space.

Cottage owners, want to help with our research library? You could provide us with the history of your cottage. If you do not have the information in hand, make it a project for the summer months. We are interested in the previous owners of the cottages as well as the



The Society home at
206 Pennsylvania Avenue in Mt. Gretna

Seasonal Hours

- Saturday - 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
- Sunday - 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM



present owners. Present and past names of each cottage are important too. Each cottage history will be placed in a separate file folder in our library for future research purposes. Any photos past or present would be welcome in the file.

Mt. Gretna Family genealogy is another area of research material that we wish to acquire for the files. Has your family either owned or rented cottages in the area over several generations? Provide us with the names of family members and their relationship to one another, their involvement in Mount Gretna along with some family history. We will make a separate file just for your family. And we always welcome new volunteers. Contact us if you are available.

Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society NAMED GIFT OPPORTUNITIES

1	Cottage	\$100,000
2	Museum Name	50,000
3	Front Porch	25,000
4	Historic Research Room	[Taken]
5	Kitchen/ Display Room	15,000
6	Vault	15,000
7	Headquarters Office	12,000
8	Garden	[Taken]
9	Handicap Entrance	10,000
10	Victorian Bedroom	[Taken]
11	NE Victorian Bedroom	[Taken]
12	Display Room - Second Floor	8,000
13	Office Entrance/Display	7,000
14	Archival Storage Room - 2nd Floor	7,000
15	Large Display Case	[Taken]
16	Large Display Case	6,000
17	Large Display Case	6,000
18	Large Display Case	6,000
19	Bathroom - Second Floor	6,000
20	Medium Display Case	[Taken]
21	Medium Display Case	[Taken]
22	Staircase/Sign Display	4,000
23	Fireproof File Cabinet	1,000
24	Fireproof File Cabinet	1,000
25	Fireproof File Cabinet	1,000

Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society “Somewhere in Time” Campaign

*What would you like to “Show and Tell”
about your history or knowledge of the
best of the past in Mt. Gretna?*

- family memories
- friends who met (or married) in Mt. Gretna
- the history of your cottage, home or neighborhood
- special people you knew or knew of

Our campaign to raise almost \$300,000 will be in full swing this summer. The committee is organizing fun and inclusive ways to get people sharing those wonderful stories and memories in each neighborhood in June. Everyone will be invited to visit the new home of the Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society. We want to talk to and reach everyone who is interested in preserving the special place that is Mt. Gretna through the programs, collections and oral histories of the Society.

If you would like to help us make the neighborhood-based campaign effective and enjoyable, please call Susan Wood at 964-3069 or email Susanowood@comcast.net. You can distribute brochures, make phone calls, guide tours, host a reception, or do any number of things that will be valuable to the campaign.

Be sure to notice the lineup of programs for the summer! We'll see you there.

Committee members are:

David Bronstein D.O.	Thomas Mayer
Fred N. Buch	Ellie Miller
Steve Gibble	James Miller
Madeline Gray	Cindy Myer
Deborah Hurst	Marla Pitt
Dr. Jeffrey Hurst	David Wood
Evelyn Koppel	Susan Wood, Chair



MOUNT GRETNA AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Summer 2009 Programs

Friday, June 5; 7:30 P.M.

Preserving the Historic Character of Mt. Gretna Cottages

Presentation by Michael Charelian

Mr. Charelian is a contractor from Annville who specializes in historically correct remodeling and construction. He will give a slide presentation showing and discussing his work. Following his program he will answer questions. The MGAHS encourages Mt. Gretnans to use historically correct features in their own building and remodeling.



Saturday, June 6; 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Preserving the Historic Character of Mt. Gretna Cottages

Vendor Exhibits, Resources and Consultation

Mr. Charelian will be joined by other contractors and experts who work in historically correct remodeling and construction. Resource persons will include a landscaper who works with indigenous and native plantings; an interior decorator who specializes in antiques and old oriental rugs; a furniture maker; and other vendors and contractors. The MGAHS encourages Mt. Gretnans to collect ideas and product suggestions that will be helpful in their own building and remodeling.



Friday, July 10; 7:30 P.M.

Memories of a Bygone Era: A History of the South Mountain Resort

Presentation by Richard Miller

Mr. Miller has studied the history of the South Mountain Resort which was very similar to Mt. Gretna's Hotel Conewago. They were built in

the same era, serving similar clientele. Their architectural designs were similar. Hotel Conewago "comes alive" when we learn about the South Mountain Resort.



Friday, July 31; 7:30 P.M.

Reunion of former Mt. Gretna Lake & Beach Employees

Moderated by John Feather

Mr. Feather, a Mt. Gretna resident and former lifeguard at the Mt. Gretna Lake & Beach, will moderated an evening of history, stories and memories of its former employees. Everyone is welcome to come, share and hear memories of times past to the present.



Friday, August 21; 7:30 P.M.

Where Mt. Gretna Began

Memories of Timber Hills, Conewago Hill, and Timber Bridge: A Panel Program moderated by Howard Applegate

Mt. Gretna had its beginnings north of Route 117 with a railroad station, an amusement park, a farm exhibition center, the PA National Guard summer encampment. A panel of residents will share their memories. A special overlay map of that area, prepared by Dr. James Seltzer, will be presented showing today's Google Earth image and the National Guard's 1900 Camp Hastings at the program. Residents can discover what was on their property over 100 years ago!

**ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT
THE HALL OF PHILOSOPHY**



The Prison that Never Was

By Jeff Hurst

The radio announcer asked Joe from Mt. Gretna where he worked and Joe responded "I work where almost everyone in Mt. Gretna works, the prison. If what initially started in the mid-1930's had come to fruition, Mt. Gretna would be a different place than it is today.

In the late 1930's there were several activities that came together that affected the area. The first of these was included in the 1937 budget address of then Governor George Earle indicating that the Commonwealth's prisons were antiquated and unsatisfactory in a number of aspects. As a result of this the legislature created the General State Authority and charged it with carrying out a number of large capital projects that would create jobs and fuel the economy. One major result would be the creation of a maximum security prison at Mt. Gretna. The choice of this area came from the fact that the Pennsylvania National Guard had left the Mt. Gretna area years before when they moved to the current location at Indiantown Gap near Annville. According to information from a book on the subject, the project was funded by two appropriations from the General Services Administration of \$3.5 million. There were a number of names floated for the project but it was

never formally named. Interesting enough, if you think about building a new prison in 2008, there would be numerous public hearings, letters to newspapers and potentially even public protests. But when this project was proposed, there was essentially no public comment. The design of the prison was shown to the public in 1937 and it was said to be a combination of castle and modern building materials. There is not sufficient space in this article to go into all the details but is safe to say that it would have been unique. The site chosen was outside of Lawn and some initial sites were considered in 1938 but no mention was made of the project in the 1939 budget address. It seems most likely that the lack of federal funds being allocated in 1939 doomed the project.

Should you be interested in seeing the site, you can take the road south out of Lawn cross the turnpike and pull into a parking area for the State Game Lands on the left. The intended site unfolds before you. There you can see some of the initial construction and preparation. For the truly interested, it is recommended that you seek a look in either the early spring or late fall. Just avoid the summer when the vegetation obscures everything. Additional details about the site and the proposed prison are available in the book by Pharase Gible titled "The Mt. Gretna State Maximum Security Prison –A Monumental Failure" and are available through the Historical Society.

Docents

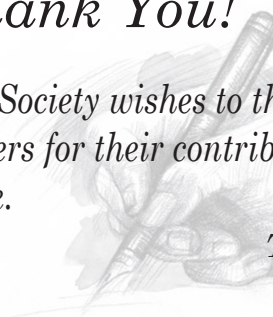
In addition to the continuing need for docents this summer at the headquarters, the society is also going to be operating the former Information Center as a satellite location.

*Volunteers are needed for Saturdays and Sundays to work 2 hour shifts.
Please call 964-3481 or email
MtGretnaLibrary@aol.com to volunteer.*

Thank You!

The Society wishes to thank all newsletter writers for their contributions and hard work.

Ted Martin, Editor





OTHER BUSINESS SPONSORS

Buch Church Organ Co.
Ephrata

Mount Gretna Lake & Beach
Mt. Gretna

The Jigger Shop
Mt. Gretna

Chef on the Go
Mount Gretna

Mt. Gretna Realty
Mt. Gretna

Timber Dinner Theatre
Mt. Gretna

Gretna Emporium
Mt. Gretna

Roland Nissley, Architect
Mount Gretna

La Cigale
Mount Gretna

Taylor Miller Pipe Organs,
York, PA

MT. GRETNAL AREA HISTORICAL

SOCIETY BOARD TRUSTEES

2007 - 2008

JACK ANDERSON Trustee/Oral History
DR. DAVID BRONSTEIN Trustee
FRED N. BUCH Chairman
JOHN FEATHER, JR. Trustee
SHAWN P. HARBAUGH Trustee
DEBORAH HURST Secretary
DR. JEFFREY HURST Trustee
TED MARTIN Trustee/Newsletter

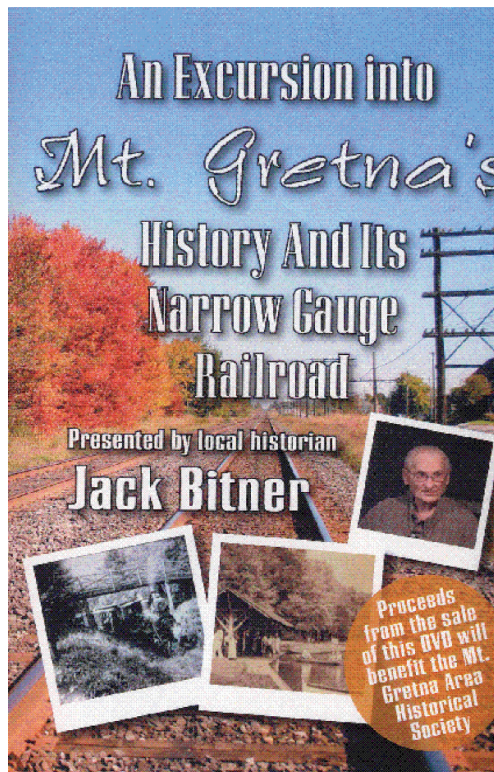
CINDY MYER Trustee/Membership
ROLAND NISSLEY Vice Chairman
PEGGY O'NIEL Trustee/Program/PR
COL. GEORGE RESH Trustee
MARLA PITT Trustee
MICHAEL TRUMP Trustee
DAVID WOOD Trustee/Treas/Fin&End
EARL LENINGTON Trustee

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

CONNIE DWYER Bulk Mail Supervisor
TOMOTHY NIEMAN Honorary Trustee
PETER S. SEIBERT Honorary Trustee
STEVE GIBBLE Honorary Trustee



www.mtgretnahistory.org



MT. GRETNA AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Enjoy Jack Bitner's history of Mt. Gretna on a two DVD boxed set which includes the early history of the Chautaugua and the Narrow Gauge Railroad. The boxed set is only \$29.95. Order today or have it shipped for only \$4.00 more.

ORDER TODAY

Two Disk Boxed Set

\$29.95 x Quantity

Total _____

\$4.00 Shipping and Handling

Total _____

Total _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to:

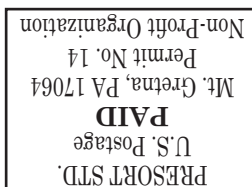
Fred Buch

DVD Order Enclosed

PO Box 362, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064

Checks Payable to Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society

Return Service Requested



P.O. Box 362
Mount Gretna, Pennsylvania 17064-0362

