

The Gretna Chronicles NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Report by Fred Buch

Inside this issue:

<i>Campmeeting Illumination</i>	3
<i>Tour of Homes sneak peeks</i>	
<i>Mt. Hope Furnace</i>	3
<i>MHS Book</i>	4
<i>Builder's Show</i>	4
<i>Growing up in Gretna</i>	4
<i>Historical Society Info</i>	5

I am pleased to report that our Capital Campaign is over the halfway mark in cash and pledges. Originally there were two mortgages. The first mortgage on the Historical Society Headquarters at 206 Pennsylvania Avenue for \$100,000, due within a year, was retired this spring. We have pledges in excess of \$50,000 and some cash contributions towards the \$200,000 second mortgage. In Nov., we will begin a year end campaign to further reduce the mortgage balance. Please consider becoming a part of this project to preserve the history and artifacts of our beloved Mount Gretna.

Again this year, we've had record number of visitors at the museum and attendance at Historical Society sponsored events. Two bedrooms were furnished with donated Mt. Gretna furniture and artifacts.

Thanks to Glin Atkinson for making the rooms come alive in the true Gretna style.

This year, the Pa. Chautauqua placed their collection of minutes from the first meeting in 1891 to the year 2000 on permanent loan at the Society. These minutes have valuable and interesting information about years gone by along with the struggles of the past. Joyce Ebright has begun researching these minutes and is writing articles that will be published in newsletters and future Historical Society Journals. Don't miss her first article about the Chautauqua Movement in this newsletter.

Many individuals from the community have donated more photos and artifacts that will be displayed in the future. Next season, we hope to have even



more events and new exhibits for your enjoyment. We are looking for additional docents for next summer. If any of our members wish to help in the museum next summer, for the first time, please contact me.

On a final note, if you have not renewed your membership for this year, please get that in by the end of the year. Looking forward to seeing you next year.

The Chautauqua Movement by Joyce Ebright

Ever wonder how the Chautauqua communities got started? Are there other active, thriving communities like Mt. Gretna Chautauqua?

The Chautauqua "idea" had its beginning in Chautauqua, N.Y., during the last decade of the nineteenth century. The founders of this movement, Lewis Miller and Dr. John Heyl Vincent, shared a passion for

education. They viewed education as a life-long process to be enjoyed by all, not just people of wealth or status.

Dr. Vincent, a licensed minister in the Methodist Church, created an idea known as reading circles during his circuit riding days. This idea was then developed into a four year course of study which included

lectures and private readings. An elaborate system of "seals" and "orders" was used to encourage and reward achievement. At the conclusion of the four- year course, a diploma was awarded at a "Recognition Day" ceremony held on Chautauqua grounds. This system became known as the Chautauqua Literary and Science Circle (CLSL), and (see page 2)



Doug Allen, WGAL-TV

Doug Allen from WGAL-TV broadcast his live local weather and backyard barbeque from the Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society in August.

The Chautauqua Movement (con't from front page)



it was one of the major reasons for the expansion of the Chautauqua movement beyond the Mother Chautauqua in N.Y.

Groups of interested people quickly formed reading circles, some on their own, others sponsored by churches or schools. While there was no formal reading list, the Mother Chautauqua did offer suggestions and guidelines, as well as

information about events at other CLSC locations. All that was required was to register at the central office and pay a fee.

Gradually, Independent Chautauquas began to spring up around the country. Some were started by people who participated in CLSC programs. Others were started by people who had visited the Mother Chautauqua and wanted the same opportunities and experiences close to home.

All Independent Chautauquas had several things in common. They had to be located near a source of transportation that allowed for the movement of large groups of people. Most used the Mother Chau-

tauqua as a prototype. An independent had a Hall of Philosophy, an auditorium, a CLSC Building and a bookstore. In addition, an inn or hotel, dormitories and cottages were needed to house visitors, staff and lecturers. Independents were responsible for all programs, lecturers and music needed to draw people to their Assembly.

By the mid 1890s, the Independents were losing steam. They were caught between rising costs and the pinch of the "depression of 1893." This left them with little alternative but to cut expenses.

The first attempt at cost cutting was the creation of the Western Federation of Chautauquas to negotiate uniform talent contracts for its members. Constant scheduling difficulties ended this effort. The next attempt was the International Chautauqua Alliance which tried to make Chautauqua management more uniform and efficient. This, too, failed.

The last attempt came in the early 1900s when the Chautauqua idea merged with the reappearing Lyceum Bureaus to form a hybrid model known as traveling tent Chautauquas. These tent Chautauquas offered pre-packed programs,

lectures and entertainment to people who either could not afford to go or who did not want to go to Independents. Keith Vawter of the Redpath Lyceum Bureau developed a system to move lecturers and entertainment by train to scheduled locations. Many of the pressing issues of the day were discussed in these settings, and soon tent Chautauquas took on an importance not known to the Independents. Many of the Independents simply could not compete with the new hybrid model and had to close.

By the 1930s, tent Chautauquas had pretty much run their course. Audiences were demanding a higher quality of entertainment, and the weight of the depression was preventing more and more communities from raising the "booking guarantees" needed to pay for tent Chautauqua programs.

Fortunately, about 50 Chautauqua Independents, like Mt. Gretna, found a way to survive. Although the Mother Chautauqua filed for bankruptcy in the 1930s, it is still operating today. Each summer, these Chautauquas continue to provide lectures, book reviews, arts and music programs. In doing so, they are keeping the Chautauqua "idea" alive.

"Fortunately, about 50 Chautauqua Independents, like Mt. Gretna, found a way to survive."

Our Mission: The Society is charged with preserving the heritage of the entire Mount Gretna area, including Mount Gretna Borough, the Pennsylvania Chautauqua, Mount Gretna Camp Meeting, Mount Gretna Heights, Timber Hills, Conewago Hill, Stoberdale, areas to Colebrook once occupied by the Pennsylvania National Guard, and areas of Cornwall which involved the Coleman family

Campmeeting Cottage Illumination



Photo provided by Madelaine Gray

Campmeeting residents are reinvigorating the cottage illumination. The end of the summer Bible Festival was traditionally marked by porch lighting throughout the community. The warm summer glow hearkens back to this golden age of the Campmeetings.

Mt. Hope Furnace and the Grubb Community

Looking back over 100 years ago to the days of the iron furnaces and stately stone mansion houses in Lebanon County, Dr. William B. Rhoads talked about the history of the Mt. Hope Furnace and the community established by the Grubb Family. Like so many of the Mt. Gretna residents attending this July event of the Chautauqua Summer Programs, Dr. Rhoads spent his youth in Lebanon County with his family at the Mt. Hope Furnace. Dr. Rhoads, Professor Emeritus of the Art History Department of the State University of New York at New Paltz, is the owner of the furnace and charcoal house ruins and one of the iron workers houses in the community.

His illustrated talk included slides and history not only of the Mt. Hope Furnace, but the division of the property by the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the transformation of the

Grubbs Mansion House to how it looks today.

The following day, many of the people who attended the Friday evening program traveled to the Mt. Hope site. Hiking through the briars and bushes, Dr. Rhoads lead the way to the site of the charcoal house and the furnace. This area allowed visibility of the old Mine Road that ran to Cornwall where they obtained the iron ore. Deep into the woods, there was a small cabin that Dr. Rhoads' father bought along with all the acres of woods as a retreat for his family many years ago.

As we exited the woods there was a trolley station, with a Philadelphia trolley car. Several years ago Dr. Rhoads purchased the trolley car and moved it to the site that has about 100 to 200 feet of track. Many of visitors came aboard the trolley for their first trolley ride.

Many who attended the events indicated that they would like to have this program and tour repeated. With so much interest, this program with Dr. Rhoads has been scheduled in 2012 and the distillery may be added to the tour.

“Many of visitors came aboard the trolley for their first trolley ride.”



Peek inside the Mt. Gretna Tour of Homes.

Photo by Madelaine Gray



Peek inside the Mt. Gretna Tour of Homes.

Photo by Madelaine Gray

Milton Hershey School book

by Jack Anderson

On Friday, Aug. 27, author Carol Smalley made a presentation about two books she was commissioned to write in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Milton Hershey school. Ms. Smalley is the author of numerous children's books. She wrote these two delightful stories with and for the children of the school.

The Growing Story of Milton Hershey School, illustrated by Bot Roda, was written in the style of historical fiction. It tells the story of Milton Hershey and the school he and his wife,

Catherine, founded in 1909. Smalley wove the Hershey history into a related story of a century-old oak tree that also took root in Hershey in 1909.

Diary of a Milt: Living in the '70s at Milton Hershey School, was written in the style of a journal.

Although she now lives the Adirondacks, Ms. Smalley grew up in Hershey. She discussed her creative process and told how her research and writing were for her a walk down memory lane.

Local Builder's Show

The second annual Builder's Show, sponsored by the MGAHS Architectural Preservation Advisory was held at the Hall of Philosophy, on June 4, 2010, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The Builder's Show was designed for cottage owners interested in maintaining the historical integrity of their cottages, whether remodeling or

embarking on new construction.

The builders and vendors set up displays, and brought samples, photographs and reference books. The builders and vendors were prepared to answer attendees' questions, and welcomed discussion. The turnout was strong and a number of contacts were made.

The Participants for the

Second Annual Builder's Show were; General Contractors; Kirk Bussell, Michael Charelain, and John Balmer, Lebanon Building and Supply, Thatcher Bornman, Construction, Remodeling and Painting, Steve Bushey, Custom Windows and Doors, Doug Fahenstock, Wood Shop Cabinets, Sarah Minnich, Painting, and Greg Wheeldon Plumbing.

Earl Lenington offers Gretna preservation advice. Contact him at 717.964.1882 or elenington@comcast.net.

Growing up in Gretna by Pat Pinsler

A panel of four "old timers" spoke to a large audience at the Hall of Philosophy on July 9, recounting their care-free experiences growing up year-round in the "Good Old Days" of Mt. Gretna. The freedoms they spoke of precede today's high tech gadgets, threat of liability law suits, and a much smaller winter population.

Pete Light, Bill Hicks, Morris Greiner and Pat Pinsler, representing two different age groups of the '20's-'30's-'40's, enjoyed reminiscing about their antics at the lake, evening "doggie roasts" beside the lake, frequent trips to Gov. Dick when there were open wooden towers, seeing shows at The Playhouse and the actors who

became part of the community, the National Guard encampment, and evenings spent at "Midges Stand" - the teen hangout for dancing to the jukebox, playing cards or just "hanging out."

Following the talk, comments from the audience indicated they had as much fun as the panelists.

Historical Society Visitors

Did you know ...

- During this year's Mt. Gretna Arts Show, 595 individuals toured the Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society Museum.
- In early August, 628 visitors came through the Museum during the Mt. Gretna House & Garden Tour.
- Over Art Show weekend in 2009, 670 people visited the Museum.
- The House Tour in 2009 brought another 573 visitors to the Museum.



The Society home at 206 Pennsylvania in Mt. Gretna.

Seasonal Hours:

Sat. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Sun. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Winter hours by appointment.

Please support our business sponsors

Buch Church Organ Co.
Ephrata
Chef on the Go
Mt. Gretna
Gretna Emporium
Mt. Gretna
La Cigale
Mt. Gretna
Mt. Gretna Lake & Beach

Mt. Gretna Realty
Roland Nissley, Architect
Mt. Gretna
Taylor Miller Pipe Organs
York
The Jigger Shop
Mt. Gretna
Timber Dinner Theatre
Mt. Gretna

Madelaine Gray Photography
Mt. Gretna

Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society Board

Fred N. Buch, Chairman & President
Deborah Hurst, Secretary
Cindy Myer, Treas. & Fin./Endowments
Jack Anderson, Trustee & Oral History
Dr. David Bronstein, Trustee
Dr. Patricia E. Gibble, Trustee & Military
Robert Gokey, Trustee & Military
Shawn Harbaugh, Trustee & Webmaster
Dr. Jeffrey Hurst, Trustee &

Museum Comm. Chair
Earl Lenington, Architectural Preservation Chair
Ted Martin, Trustee
Kerry McGuinness Royer, Trustee & Newsletter
Thomas L. McMahan, Trustee
Peggy O'Neil, Trustee/Program/PR
Pat Pinsler, Trustee
Marla Pitt, Trustee & Newsletter
Joan Zercher, Newsletter
Advisory:
Connie Dwyer, Bulk Mail Supervisor

Stephen R. Gibble, Esq., Honorary Trustee
Roland Nissley, Honorary Trustee
Peter S. Seibert, Honorary Trustee
David Wood, Honorary Trustee



Another peek inside the Mt. Gretna Tour of Homes.
Photo by Madelaine Gray

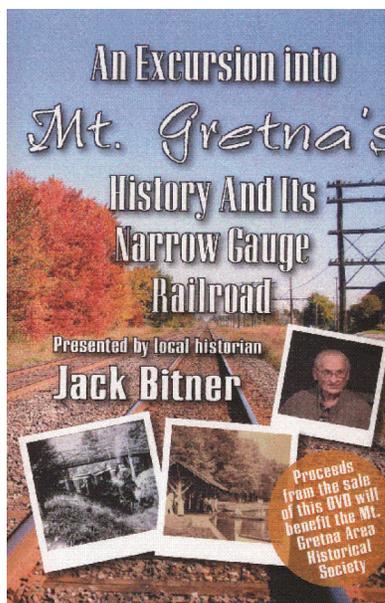
Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society

P.O. Box 362
Mt. Gretna, PA 17064

The Society home is
206 Pennsylvania Ave. in Mt. Gretna
717.964.1105

We're on the web!

www.mtgretnahistory.org



Mt. Gretna History can be yours

Visit our website to order your piece of Mt. Gretna history:
www.mtgretnahistory.org.

The Narrow Gauge Railroad booklet by Jack Bitner \$6.95 or two for \$11.00. Please add \$2.00 postage.

The Mount Gretna Maximum Security Prison – A Monumental Failure booklet by P.B. Gibble, Jr. \$5.00 + \$2.00 postage.

Car Decal "MTG" \$3.00 or two for \$5.00. Please add \$1.00 postage.

DVD -- Pennsylvania National Guard - The Mount Gretna Years 1885 to 1935, by James F. Seltzer, Ph.D. \$10.00. This includes approx. 140 photos with music background. Please add \$2.00 postage.

DVD set of two -- Mount Gretna & Narrow Gauge Railroad History presentation "unedited" by Jack Bitner. \$25.00 or two for \$45.00. Please add \$4.00 postage.

"Mount Gretna - A Coleman Legacy" by Jack Bitner is now being reprinted and should be available before Christmas. To

get your name on the waiting list to be first to receive and order form, send name, address, telephone and email, to **MGHS, Box 362, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064** or email info@buchorgan.com.