

FALL 2013

# The Gretna Chronicles NEWSLETTER

## *Beautiful Mt. Gretna In The Fall*

### Inside this issue:

*Mt. Gretna Roller  
Hockey Team* 1

*A Holy Place* 4

*MGAHS Board* 7

*Chair Report* 8

*Call for Volunteers* 8

*Upcoming Events* 9

*Mt. Gretna  
Fall Colors*

*Original*

*Photograph*

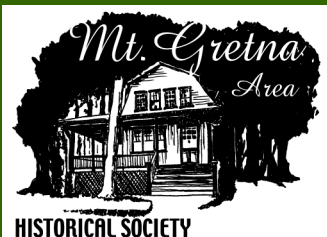
*by*

*Madelaine  
Gray*



## *Mt. Gretna Roller Hockey Team*

*by Joyce Ebright*



*A membership to the  
MGAHS is a great holiday  
gift for your friends and  
neighbors! ☺*

An article appearing in the December 16, 1930, *Lebanon Daily News* announced the formation of a roller hockey team that would play in the Mt. Gretna Skating Rink, the original exhibition building constructed by Robert H. Coleman in 1892 for the Farmer's Encampment. This team was to be called the Lebanon Rangers and would have a roster of 10 men. John Swope, the first coach, and Eddie Arnold, the first captain, were the two principals in charge of

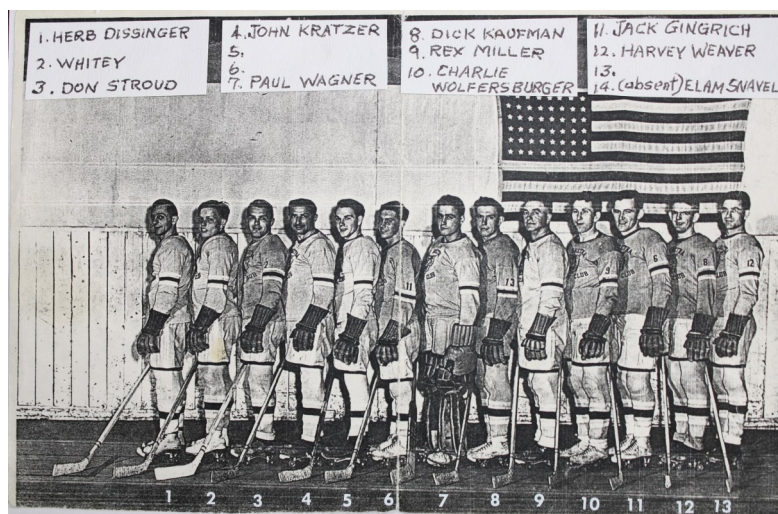
forming this team. Henry Matthews, Harry McKinney, George Weber, and Robert Gerhart were immediate player candidates. C. Yocum, R. Bartlett, and H. Fasnacht were quickly added to the roster. Once the lineup was completed, Coach Swope scheduled games with other roller hockey teams.

The first roller hockey game played in the Mt. Gretna Auditorium Rink was held on Sunday, January 4, 1931, between the Lebanon Rangers and the

Brownstown Bears. The Lebanon Rangers won 4-1 and set the tone for the type of play expected: speedy, tough, and hard checking. For most seasons, this type of play would guarantee appearances in divisional playoff and championship games.

The Lebanon Rangers played in the Western Division of the Eastern Roller Hockey Amateur League. There were a number of leagues established to play games in Pennsylvania, Maryland and New Jersey, how-

## *Mt. Gretna Roller Hockey Team (cont' from front page)*



*Mt. Gretna  
Roller*

*Hockey  
Team*

*Circa  
1930's*

*The 1932 Mt. Gretna Roller Hockey season was very successful for the Lebanon Rangers as they won 16 games, lost 4*

ever, most were not stable as teams entered and dropped out from season to season. The Lebanon Rangers not only scheduled games in their own league, but also crossed lines to host teams in other leagues. Some of the invited challengers for the 1932 season included the York (PA) Arrows, Washington (PA) Bears, Carmen's Professionals of Philadelphia, Baum's of New Jersey, Bethlehem (PA) Panthers and two teams out of Baltimore. The 1932 season was very successful for the Lebanon Rangers as they won 16 games, lost 4 and tied 5.

From examining articles and box scores in the *Lebanon Daily News* over a period of time, it appears as if the early roller hockey rules had elements of those for ice hockey. The game would have been played in a defined area 145-185 ft. long and 65-85 ft. wide. A center line or blue line was not added until the 1940 season.

Teams consisted of five players: two defensemen, two wings and a goalie. A center position is mentioned, but this player may have only taken face-offs. Two or three substitute players were also listed. From looking at the scores and penalties accessed, it appears as if there were 3 periods probably 20 minutes long and any ties would be addressed in an over-time period. If no one scored, the tie would remain. Penalties were accessed for infractions such as tripping, hooking, charging, boarding, slashing, high sticking and roughing.

The November 12, 1933 home opener against the Tamaqua Raiders found the Lebanon Rangers leaving Mt. Gretna Auditorium for the larger Sixth Street Market House Rink in Lebanon. The team name was also changed from the Lebanon Rangers to the Lebanon Tigers. Players on this team were: F. Pesta, goalie; G.

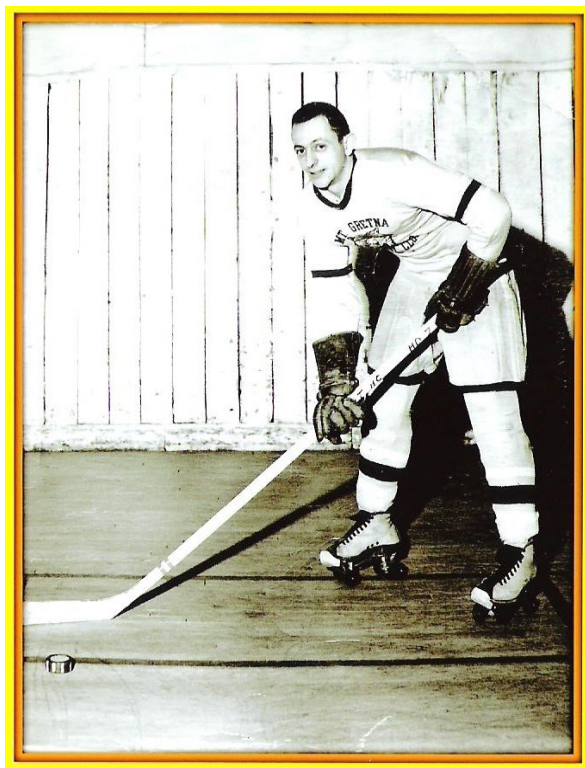
Neuman, left defense; M. Cox, right defense; E. Hinkle, center; John Kratzer, left wing; C. Harley, right wing and C. Gettle, substitute.

By November 21, 1935, the home opener found the Tigers back in Mt. Gretna with Johnny Kratzer as the coach. Herb Dissinger joined the team sometime between 1936 and 1938, and both Kratzer and Dissinger became outstanding scorers. With their help, the Mt. Gretna Tigers won the Tri-State Championship in 1939 and were Division Champions for the 1940 season.

Both Kratzer and Dissinger came out of Lebanon city and eventually made Mt. Gretna their home. According to local historian, Morris Greiner, Johnny Kratzer was in the coal business. His home, located along Route 117, was demolished to make way for Lebanon Valley Farmer's National Bank now Fulton Bank. When



## *Mt. Gretna Roller Hockey Team (cont.)*



*Both Johnny Kratzer and Herb Dissinger, (pictured above) became outstanding scorers on the 1936 and 1938 Mt. Gretna Tigers Team.*



*Mt. Gretna Tigers Tri-State Championship Badge 1939*

the bank left Mt. Gretna, Penn Realty moved into that location.

Herb Dissinger returned to the Tigers after a World War II tour of duty. He and his wife Betty bought a home on Kauffman Avenue in Heights. Many of the older residents fondly remember Herb Dissinger as the Postmaster in Mt. Gretna before the post office was renovated. When Herb needed help, Betty was often found at the post office handing out mail. In addition, Betty was organist for 50 years at the Mt. Gretna United Methodist Church, and she still lives on Kaufman Avenue.

The Eastern Roller Hockey Amateur League, which had been having problems for several years, folded mid-season 1940. The Mt. Gretna Tigers finished that season in the Central Pennsy League. By January 2, 1941, they were playing in the Maryland-Pennsylvania Amateur Roller Hockey League. Fifteen games were scheduled with teams such as the Baltimore Orioles of Arbutus, MD, Croydon (MD) Ramblers, Jeannette Fliers, Hanover Bears, Taneytown (MD) Redwings and Carlisle Rainbow later called the Aces.

How long the Mt. Gretna Tigers played in the Maryland-Pennsylvania League is not clear. By 1950, they were back in the Central Pennsy Roller Hockey League with Lemoyne, the Zephyrs from Audubon, New Jersey, the Jersey City Greyhounds, the McKeesport Mechanics as well as teams from Trenton, New Jersey, Reading and Chester. That year, the Tigers again went to the championship finals, but lost to Lemoyne. After that loss, five members of the team joined the lineup of the Carlisle Aces to travel to Ridgeway, Virginia to play the Ridgeway Ramblers. They beat the Ramblers 6-2 in a bruising game.

The last found article written about the Tigers appeared in the *Lebanon Daily News*, on May 26, 1950. Either the Central Pennsy League had folded or the Mt. Gretna Tigers could not find enough players to fill a roster. It obviously took an incredible amount of time and dedication to practice, travel, and play 2 or 3 times a week. If the team made the playoffs or championships, which they usually did, 10 additional games could be played. Most of the players had families and were holding down full-time jobs. When all is considered, perhaps it's more surprising that the Mt. Gretna Tigers were able to keep their team together and play for 20 years.

**Visit the MGAHS Museum to view historical documents and other relics of the community's history.**

## *A Holy Place by Tom Meredith*

Busy as always, the summer of 2013 in Mt. Gretna brought with it many events, some having special meaning for individuals and some for larger groups of people. For many Chautauquans, summer 2013 meant “get ready for the Chautauqua Trail Association” visiting in late July. For residents of the Campmeeting, it brought a celebration of the listing on the National Register of Historic Places. For everyone it brought the annual anticipation of the Outdoor Art Show and the temptations of the Jigger Shop.

A definite sense that this was a special summer pervaded the community. The ubiquitous Chautauqua Summer Calendar provided a guide through the overwrought days, but not even the novelty of the Bible Festival’s colorful center spread in the Calendar could fully suggest the delights in store. In fact, that listing - *Sunday, July 28, 7:00pm Massed Choir Concert, Lloyd Larson conductor* -- gave no hint of the emotional impact the program would have on its audience.

A concert by the massed voices of several combined choirs has been a staple of Bible Festival programs ever since the days when it was simply

“campmeeting.” In fact, music and choir concerts were part of the first campmeeting season in 1892, when Professor John Lehman from Lebanon Valley College was in charge of the music. And music has remained important ever since. In 1959, Professor Earle Miller of Messiah College, the Bible Conference music director, invited the Evangelical United Brethren Church choirs of Lancaster County to sing at Mt. Gretna as the first true Massed Choir concert. The practice of inviting county denominational choirs to Mt. Gretna continued and by 1963 Professor Miller was holding 4-day workshops on church music and choir directing. The workshop idea sputtered out about 1976, but the Massed Choir tradition survived. It was carried on by Francis Williamson from Albright College, and by various other directors, engaged on a year-to-year basis. All of which explains why, in recent years, the Massed Choir concert claimed so much of Don Zechman’s attention.

Don and his father together had amassed some seventy years of service to the Bible Festival, and Don’s musical talent (trumpet, piano, and organ), natu-



*2013 Mt. Gretna  
Massed Choir  
Practicing  
for the July 28  
Concert in the  
Historic Taber-  
nacle*



## *A Holy Place (cont.)*

rally made the choir concerts his special interest. Concerned with declining participation in them, Don followed up on a suggestion from Doug Troutman. Grace Marquette at Loser's Music Store in Lebanon was approached to discuss possible ways of cooperating with Loser's summer workshop, conducted annually for church musicians, and directed by well known visiting composers.

What emerged from that discussion was an agreement that, with a little adroitness, the Bible Festival's Massed Choir could be scheduled at a time that would be convenient for Loser's director to spend a day in the Campmeeting and conduct the Bible Festival concert. A day-long rehearsal is necessary when nearly 200 singers come together for the first time as a complete group. This rehearsal would amount to a mini-workshop for the singers, thus recalling another Campmeeting tradition. The arrangement was first tried in July of 2007 with Joe Martin as the visiting conductor. It was resoundingly successful and the association continues to benefit both Loser's and the Massed Choir.

So, when Lloyd Larson accepted the invitation to conduct Loser's 2013 workshop and to direct the massed choir at Gretna, he was commissioned by Doug Troutman to compose an anthem to honor the Campmeeting's listing on the National Register. Thus the Bible Festival committee could announce that the Massed Choir concert on July 28 would feature the premier performance of Lloyd Larson's new anthem "A Holy Place." It would also feature three earlier pieces dedicated to the Mt. Gretna Campmeeting: an arrangement by Jay Althouse of "All Hail the Power" for the 1992 program; an original composition by K. Lee Scott in 1996 "Rejoice in God"; and a 1999 hymn written by Rev. Richard Koehler, set to the tune "Lead On O King Eternal".

On that magical musical night when "A Holy Place" was sung for the first time in public the choir's collective voice had never sounded better. And the earlier pieces, sung with clarity and loving expression, took listeners back over the years to the times when Dick Koehler and Don Zechman played piano-organ duets; back even to the years when Earle Miller directed massed county church choirs at the conclusion

his workshop.

But now it was Lloyd Larson, a newcomer, who was leading the audience back in time through more than a century of summer worship "in the grove." A Midwesterner now residing in Minneapolis, he is a prolific and versatile composer of instrumental and vocal church music, has long been interested in the campmeeting movement, and is active in the musical and spiritual life of his home church.

All that background shone through as the vigorous, reverent chords of "A Holy Place" sounded throughout the Tabernacle, conveying a sense of strength and stability along with a hint of the joy of salvation. The anthem's restrained expression of that joy was perfectly presented, along with the quietness and sense of peace that inspired Rev. H. B. Dohner and his flock in 1892 to move their Campmeeting to this particular hillside.

The premier performance of "A Holy Place" was an unqualified success, called by some listeners as the best Massed Choir concert ever. Coming at the end of a weekend devoted to Mt. Gretna history – both Chautauqua's and Campmeeting's – this performance and this anthem rank right up there with the best "never to be forgotten" Mt. Gretna moments.



## *Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society Chair Report*

*by Fred Buch*

Did you feel that the summer of 2013 went by very quickly? If you did, you are not alone. It seems like the Mount Gretna season does not begin until about June 15<sup>th</sup> when the pollen disappears and the porch furniture may remain uncovered. This is followed by the many events in the Chautauqua and Campmeeting. Before you know it, the Cottage Tour and Art Show are here soon followed by Labor Day, the end of the season.

This shortage of time was evident at the Historical Society as well. There was so much activity that some planned projects had to be placed on hold until next year. However, our purpose is to serve you, our members and also the visitors to our special community. The register book indicates that attendance at our museum increased to 1,690 visitors viewing interesting new exhibits prepared by Pat Pinsler and Glin Atkinson. Many visitors came from Lebanon, Lancaster, Berks and York Counties, but the number of visitors from across our nation and foreign countries was surprising. The February program on the Coleman Family was well attended as were the summer programs presented on Friday evenings. As in the past, we have received many artifacts, documents, books and photographs as donations for our collection.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, I thank you for your donations of time and finances which permits us to continue "free admission" to the museum and library/research areas. Your financial assistance also provides for much needed controlled environment for the valuable collection.

Through one of our Director's connections with folks at the PA State Archives, we will have a new volunteer, Carol Buck, who will catalog and archive items in our collection. Carol holds a Masters Degrees in American Studies from Penn State University. She also volunteers at the State Archives and at the Dauphin County Historical Society archiving in their collections. We have received a grant and a few contributions to purchase a new computer, Past Perfect museum software, and Microsoft software to bring our collections up to date technologically.

With the assistance of Mary Foltz, President of Service Counts, our committee structure has been revised and we will need more volunteers to complete the tasks at hand. If you offered your services as a volunteer in the past, you may receive a call to assist with one of our committees. Please consider giving your time to make our committees productive. Schedules are flexible to fit your availability. Please contact Pat Gobble at [pegobble@gmail.com](mailto:pegobble@gmail.com) or 717-964-3147 for more information.

Our gratitude goes out to Kerry Royer, the co-editor of the Historical Society newsletter, who along with her family has moved to State College where her husband has taken a position at the University. We will miss her, but she has prepared our remaining newsletter editors, Marla Pitt and Pat Gobble to continue providing an interesting and informative publication for your enjoyment. We are pleased to continue providing interesting articles researched and written by Joyce Ebright and Tom Meredith.

If you wish to bring people to see the museum or if you need information from our research center, we will be open all winter by appointment. Call Pat Pinsler at 964-3858 for an appointment. Our Board of Directors and our Committees will be working throughout the winter months preparing for special programs and projects for 2014. The year 2014, marks the TENTH ANNIVERSARY of the founding of the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society.

*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 Campmeeting, 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.*

## *Please Support Our Business Sponsors*

### **Buch Enterprises LLC**

1391 West Main St.  
Ephrata, Pa. 17522  
717-733-6614

### **Chef On The Go**

P.O. Box 194  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-3541

### **David L. Garver**

**Insurance**  
809 Holly Lane  
Lebanon, Pa. 17042  
717-274-5810

### **Jigger Shop**

PO Box 520  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-9686

### **Madelaine Gray**

**Photography**  
PO Box 219  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-3118

### **Mt. Gretna Inn**

16 Kauffman St.  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-3034

### **Mt. Gretna Realty**

PO Box 338  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-2100

### **Roland Nissley, Architect**

PO Box 460  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-2235

### **Taylor Miller Pipe Organs**

26 E. 10th Ave.  
York, PA. 17404  
717-845-6504

### **Timbers Dinner Theatre**

350 Timber Road  
P.O. Box 10  
Mt. Gretna, Pa. 17064  
717-964-3601

*Thanks to the members of the Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society who are receiving their newsletter by e-mail. This helps to curtail printing and postage costs and allows downloading the entire newsletter in full color. To receive your newsletter by e-mail, visit the website at [www.mtgretnahistory.org](http://www.mtgretnahistory.org) and click on newsletter or e-mail [info@buchorgan.com](mailto:info@buchorgan.com).*

## *Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society Board*

### **Fred N. Buch,**

Chairman & President

### **Glin Atkinson, Trustee**

### **Jack Anderson**

Trustee

### **Larry Bowman,, Trustee, Vice**

President

### **Dr. David Bronstein, Trustee**

### **Connie Dwyer, Trustee, Secretary**

### **Dr. Patricia E. Gibble, Trustee**

### **Dwayne Heckert, Trustee**

### **Ron Hontz, Trustee**

### **Thomas L. McMahan, Trustee**

### **Cindy Myer, Treasurer**

### **Pat Pinsler, Trustee**

### **Marla Pitt, Trustee,**

### **Rev. Michael Remel, Trustee**

### **David Tyndall, Trustee**

### **Advisory:**

*Dr. Jeff & Deborah Hurst Publications*

*Stephen R. Gibble, Esq.,*

*Honorary Trustee*

*Roland Nissley, Honorary Trustee*

*Teresa Marks, Membership Sec'y*

*David Wood, Honorary Trustee*

*Shawn Harbaugh, Webmaster*

*Earl Lenington, Architectural*



**The Society home at  
206 Pennsylvania Ave., Mt. Gretna  
Winter Hours**

**Call for appointment:**

**964-3858 or**

**964-3813**

**Research Library is open—Call for appointment.**

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

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

---

We're on the web!  
[www.mtgretnahistory.org](http://www.mtgretnahistory.org)

---



**MTGAHS**  
*Upcoming Events 2014*

Upcoming Events for 2014 include a tantalizing group of speakers & programs. Look for the dates for the Summer Programs - Spring Newsletter.

\*Winter Program—To be announced

Photograph & Post Card  
Presentation

\*Summer Programs

Cottage Builder's Show

The Camp Meeting Movement

Mt. Gretna Post Card Artifact  
Show

The Art Show History - 40 Years  
of Success

Walking Tours of Mt. Gretna



*Too Many  
Leaves, So  
Little Time!!*

*Photograph  
By  
Madelaine  
Gray*



