

THE GRETNA Chronicles

PUBLISHED BY THE MOUNT GRETNA AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY • SPRING 2021



The Chester-Pollard Play Football Vintage Arcade Game by Bob Eynon

New this season! Be sure to visit the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society Museum to see our "New" Vintage Arcade Game. The museum is open Saturdays and Sundays, Memorial Day through Labor Day, 1-4pm.

It's the Roarin'Twenties in Mount Gretna, the 1920's that is. Calvin Coolidge is President, women just won the right to vote a few years ago, the Great Depression is yet to come, and Gretna Park is a place of relaxation and entertainment.

You find yourself on a warm summer's day drawn to this Gretna Park. You have heard wonderful things about it, and not the least right now is that it is in the woods and a bit cooler than where you are. What if you took the whole family for an outing? A short train ride on the Cornwall and Lebanon Railroad gets you right there and there is something to do

for everyone including a lake with a bath house and diving pier, swings, an incredible carousel, a photographer, pop corn, a bakery, a novelty shop, a telegraph for that important message you need to send, ten pins, skee ball, and a casino. The casino has you intrigued as you have also heard it called the billiards building.

So, you dress up the family and are on your way. Adventures and experiences await as you arrive and wander through Gretna Park. And yes, it is cooler here! You marvel at the beautiful water fountain shortly after getting off the train and also note both a stable and a garage as a sign of the changing times. The automobile has

become a popular mode of transportation and the Ford Model T, around for 20 years, just came out with their four door Touring model, but horse and carriage are still used.

After lunch in the park you come upon the Casino building, not far from the Exhibition Building that hosts the Farmers Encampment every year. Inside you do see many a billiard table, but there are also other games of skill. One is quite interesting and is called Play Football. For a penny or a nickel, two players can compete by getting their team of players on the field to kick the steel ball into the opponent's net, while the goalie guards the net. Also, a sign of the changing times is

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The Mount Gretna Area Historical Society's Chester-Pollard Play Football Arcade Game

Gretna Chronicles

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THE MT.GRETNA AREA

HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a non-
profit 501 (c) (3) organization and is
registered as a charitable organization with
the State of Pennsylvania. The MGAHS
is charged with preserving the heritage of
the Mount Gretna area, including Mount
Gretna Borough, Campmeeting, the
Pennsylvania Chautauqua, the Heights,
Timber Hills, Conewago Hill, Stoberdale,
areas of Colebrook once occupied by the
Pa. National Guard, and areas of Cornwall
involved with the Coleman family.

THE MGAHS MUSEUM is open
Memorial Day through Labor Day, Satur-
days and Sundays, 1-4pm, or by appoint-
ment. We offer school and group tours, sum-
mer walking tours, and research assistance
by appointment throughout the year.

Our newsletter, *Gretna Chronicles*, is
available online at www.mtgretnahistory.org.
Topical publications of the Historical
Society, *Glimpses of the Past*, are available
for purchase at www.mtgretnahistory.org.

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From Our Board of Trustees

Chairman's Report

by Ralph Zimmerman

SPRING has arrived and we all look forward to having everyone back out in Mt. Gretna and visiting the museum. This summer will mark the end of my six years on the board of MGAHS. During this time, I have seen many building improvements at the museum and watched the organization take a more active role in our community. I encourage everyone who has an interest in the history of the Mt. Gretna area to volunteer and become involved.

Volunteers are the driving force of our organization so any time you can afford to give will be very much appreciated.

As you all know, during the last year we had to close the museum to visitors due to the pandemic, but that did not stop our volunteers. Last summer we enlisted Mt. Gretna resident, Josh Zaring, to produce a virtual tour of the museum which you can enjoy by viewing on YouTube. Just go to our website – mtgretnahistory.org or click here on “[Virtual Tour](#)”.

This past fall we created a “Spirit of Mt. Gretna” t-shirt designed by another Mt. Gretna resident, Sara Williams. “It was very well received with some purchases being shipped out of state to supporters. We thank all of you for your support.

This spring we added another display room (previously used for storage) on the second floor where you can now see the new Chester Pollard football arcade game which is the subject of our feature article by Bob Eynon.



Ralph Zimmerman

In addition, we are in the process of producing a series of booklets entitled *Glimpses of the Past* which will be written on topics of the Mt. Gretna area.

Less visible but equally important, we have been busy with building improvements. On the 2nd Floor of the museum to protect our building and our collection:

- Put up bead board and stained it
- Installed exterior storm windows
- Installed interior insulating windows
- Blew insulation into walls, ceiling and roof
- Adding a new split system to control temperature and humidity

I look forward to seeing everyone come out to support all the organizations in Mt. Gretna this summer. It has been a pleasure and a fulfilling experience serving on the board. - Ralph Zimmerman 🍀



As part of a National Honor Society project, Luke Royer (at left) volunteered to apply the stain and finish to our additional room in the museum. Volunteer Barney Meyers, on right, helped with reconfiguring some of our museum display. Thank you! Your work is greatly appreciated.

The Chester-Pollard Play Football Vintage Arcade Game

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that during these years football refers both to the emerging American game that uses an oblong ball, as well as the game played in much of the rest of the world that will eventually become known as soccer in the United States. This game in front of you is clearly of the soccer variety. But a penny for each time you play and try to even the score? But it is fun, so another penny goes in as you play against one of your children.

Back to the present, the 2020's. We are thrilled that an arcade piece of the 1920s in Gretna Park has just been donated to The Mount Gretna Area Historical Society in the form of that "Play Football"

arcade game. Reported to have been played by Gretna historian, Jack Bittner, the piece now resides in the Museum and is amazingly still functional. In fact, as it was being moved, an extra steel football (soccer ball) was discovered as it rolled out of wherever it was hiding in the game's intricate mechanisms.

We know this piece is part of our local heritage, that the game was present in Gretna Park, and that it represents an important change in the arcade games of the time. In its original condition the game came in a beautiful wooden cabinet with a glass front and a stadium of fans painted on its back wall. Two levers on the front each operated a different team of players which all kicked at once. Inserting a coin, reported to be a penny, in the slot caused a steel ball to rise from below and onto the playing field where it settled into indentations in front of each player where it could be kicked down the field and into the goal. It represented the first arcade games of skill that were sports themed. Up until this time, arcade games of skill included the "diggers", "claws", and target "shooter" varieties. In some of the latter, a penny was both used as the projectile and payment for play.

This "Play Football" game was produced by the Chester-Pollard Amusement Company, Inc., based out of New York state. The

company had opened a few years earlier making fortune telling machines. The "Play Football" game was a test of the concept of sports themed games and was so successful it led to the production of four other sports themed



Play Football as it would have appeared in the 1920s. Image courtesy of Hunt Auctions LLC.

games by the same company, some of which sold at least 7000 units. The other games were "Golf for Two" and "Junior Golf" in 1927, "Play Golf" in 1928, and a horse racing "Play the Derby" game in 1929. The initial production date for the "Play Football" game is reported to have been either 1924 or 1926, the latter year reported to have been when they were asked by an English businessman, who owned the patent on the game, if the brothers were interested in the North American manufacturing rights.

The popularity of sports themed arcade games likely was aided during these years by the popularity of radio and the expansion of mass market advertising that included a focus on celebrities and sports heroes. Famously, "Babe" Ruth played for the New York Yankees during the 1920s and these were the years when both American Football and American Soccer leagues were forming, dissolving, and reforming anew.

While it may appear that the Great Depression in 1929 corresponded to the last game released in 1929, and led to the business's demise, this is not the case. The Depression, in fact, made these

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Images of Mount Gretna Area Historical Society's Chester-Pollard Play Football Arcade Game, courtesy of Bob Eynon.

The Chester-Pollard Play Football Vintage Arcade Game

continued from page 3

games more popular as they represented inexpensive entertainment during a time of widespread financial hardship. In fact, the Chester-Pollard Company, which was formed by the three Chester brothers, Frank, Charles, and Ernest (they included their mother's maiden name, Pollard), went on to change the arcade experience in the New York area by creating concentrated gaming venues called Sportlands, where people gathered for entertainment. It is reported that they had fifty-two such Sportland locations in and around New York City by 1933 during the depths of the Depression.

We hope as the museum opens in the coming year you will have the opportunity to visit and relive a little Mount Gretna history with our "new", almost one hundred-year-old, addition to the collection. 

Bob Eynon is a Mount Gretna resident and a member of our MGAHS Board of Directors, where he serves on the MGAHS Building and Grounds Committee and the MGAHS Finance Committee.

Thank you to MGAHS Board Member Chic Rhoads for his part in securing the game's donation to our museum.

ARCADE GAME REFERENCES:

Arcade Game History
[https://www.arcade-museum.com/
game_detail.php?game_id=4688](https://www.arcade-museum.com/game_detail.php?game_id=4688)

Vintage Game History
[https://videogamehistorian.wordpress.
com/tag/chester-pollard-amusement-
company/](https://videogamehistorian.wordpress.com/tag/chester-pollard-amusement-company/)

Short You Tube video:
[https://www.youtube.com
watch?v=HiM1XriIFKM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiM1XriIFKM)

Calling All Cottage/Home Owners!

What is your property's story? Have you ever wondered what your cottage would tell you if it could talk? In fact, we hosted a program with that title: "If Cottages Could Talk." At the program, cottage owners shared the results of their research, enlightening all in attendance about the cottages and the broader history of the community.

One of the most often asked questions we get is, "What can you tell me about my cottage?" The Mount Gretna Area Historical Society is compiling a database of such information. Will you help us? We encourage all owners to research and share with us what they learn about the history of their properties. Click [HERE](#) to fill out an online form.

To help you begin this fascinating quest, the Board has compiled some resources.

A good place to begin is the Lebanon County Recorder of Deeds, Room 107, Municipal Building, 400 S. 8th Street, Lebanon, PA. The office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Appointments are required and can be made by calling 717-228-4447. Property ownership records are in the deed books. Included in the record are the date of the sale, the name of the seller, the name of the buyer, and the purchase price, all fascinating information. Property records are also available at www.landex.com/remote or www.landex.com/webstore. There is a charge to use this online service.

Another source of information is local newspapers. The Mount Gretna Area Historical Society's research library has a subscription to Newspapers.com. Using owners' names, dates,

and the cottage name, if known, researchers should check the social pages of these publications to be transported to an earlier era when get-togethers on the porch were regular activities--indeed much as they are today though they most likely do not make the newspaper's society pages! For help with accessing Newspapers.com, contact the Society for an appointment. 717-964-1105

A final, if random, way to learn cottage history is through oral history. Talking to neighbors who have owned nearby cottages may yield unexpected, delightful anecdotes. People walking by may also add details as they reminisce about renting or even owning the property. In addition, we have volunteers who serve on our Oral History Committee who would love to talk with you and record your memories about your cottage or others. Call or email the Historical Society.

We hope these resources and suggestions inspire you to get started on your own historical journey. We would also like to note that the use of the noun "cottages" may suggest a limited style of residence when, in fact, we are eager to learn about ALL residences in our unique Mount Gretna community to appreciate their role in our ongoing story. The form included with this article may be used to share with us what you discover.

Please contact us if you have questions.
717-964-1105
mtgretnahistory@gmail.com





IF COTTAGES COULD TALK: THE HISTORY OF MY MOUNT GRETNA COTTAGE/HOME

NOTE: All fields requested are optional. MGAHS is currently working on an interactive, online map of cottage histories. *MGAHS will not share your name online in relation to your cottage but may show cottage name, date built and anecdotes unless otherwise noted by you. Call 717-964-1105 with questions.*

Street Address of my Mount Gretna Cottage/Home _____

Current Owner(s) _____

My Cottage/Home Is Located In: _____ Campmeeting _____ Chautauqua _____ Conewago Hill
_____ Mt. Gretna Heights _____ Stoberdale

Year My Cottage Was Built (If known) _____ Original Owner (If known) _____

Name of My Cottage (If applicable) _____

Any Previous Name(s) of the Cottage _____

OWNERSHIP	Date of Purchase	Purchase Price
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Continue on the back of this form if additional space is needed.

Other anecdotal and/or historical information about the cottage/home (Please feel free to upload a picture or pictures and add additional pages):

Other things for which the cottage may have been used in the past (rental cottage, boarding house, etc.):

Additional information: Feel free to include diagrams, pictures (send to mtgretnahistory@gmail.com) or add additional pages

Thank you for sharing this information on your Mount Gretna cottage/home. We will add it to the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society's archives of historical information. You will be contacted if this information becomes available online via an interactive map.

_____ I give my permission to make this information available, via the PastPerfect system, to researchers who visit, the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society Research Library.

_____ I understand that MGAHS will not share my name online in relation to my cottage but may show cottage name, date built and anecdotes unless otherwise noted above by me.

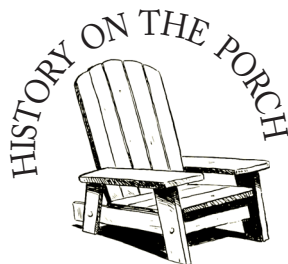
Signature

Date

MGAAHS Summer Programs

June 26th @ 10am History on the Porch.

Meet on the porch of the Historical Society (next to the Playhouse) with your questions and for informal conversation and coffee about Mount Gretna area history.



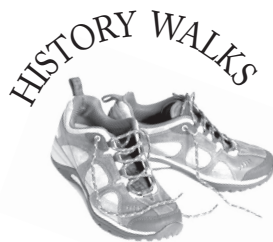
July 2 @ 7pm Hall of Philosophy

James Buchanan and Thaddeus Stevens: Lancaster Neighbors but Not Friends

Jean-Paul Benowitz illustrates the similarities and differences of two neighbors in Lancaster City who have impacted American history in two very different ways as well as their connections to local history.

July 3 @ 11am Chautauqua History Walk

Meet at information booth behind the post office. Led by Ron Hontz



July 10th @ 11am Campmeeting History Walk

Meet at corner of church parking lot near the Tabernacle. Led by Ron Hontz

August 6 @ 7pm Hall of Philosophy

Major Dick Winters and the Band of Brothers

Major Winters was an officer of the United States Army and a decorated war veteran. He is best known for having commanded Easy Company of the 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, part of the 101st Airborne Division, during World War II. He was featured in the book, *Band of Brothers*. Bob Hoffman, best friend of Winters, will share a memoir of this local hero.

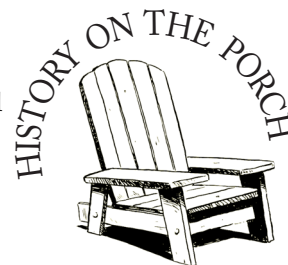
August 13 @ 7pm Hall of Philosophy

Local Ironmasters: Huber, Stiegel, Coleman

Dick Martin discusses how colonial charcoal iron production demanded the first organization of labor and community in our region, and had lasting effects on our heritage and history.

August 14 @ 10am History on the Porch.

Meet on the porch of the Historical Society (next to the Playhouse) with your questions and for informal conversation and coffee about Mount Gretna area history.




GLIMPSES OF THE PAST ...

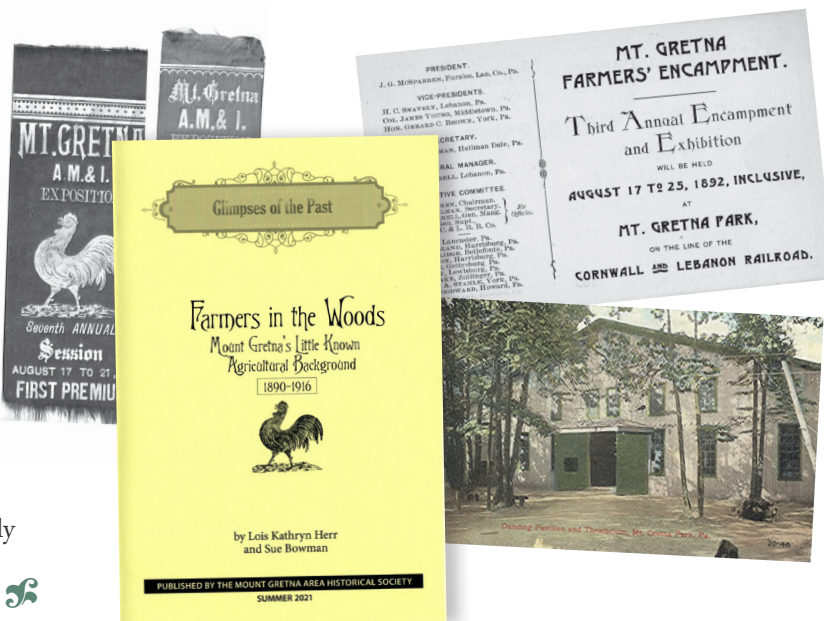
Farmers in the Woods

Imagine tens of thousands of people coming to Mt. Gretna by train and buggy with prize livestock and poultry. The first Farmers Encampment in Mount Gretna was in August 1890 — before Chautauqua and Campmeeting were officially formed.

This story, *Farmers in the Woods*, is the topic of our inaugural issue of "Glimpses of the Past," a series of booklets featuring guest authors addressing Mount Gretna historic topics and showcasing items from our museum.

This booklet, *Farmers in the Woods*, written by Lois Kathryn Herr and Sue Bowman, is currently available for sale at the Historical Society. Cost for members \$8.00; non-members \$10.00. 

Thank you to our booklet sponsors: Susan and Drew Hostetter, Marcie and David Lloyd.



Fat Man's Squeeze?

HISTORY PUZZLE: We have two postcards labeled "Fat Man's Squeeze." They were widely-circulated and always pose this question: Where was Fat Man's Squeeze? The caption indicates Campmeeting. On the bottom postcard, the cottage on the right is named "Wayside," as seen on the sign over the entrance steps. In that same postcard we see a wire fence in the foreground, to the right of the two children sitting with a basket.

Newspapers.com offers numerous references to Wayside Cottage:

- **Lebanon Daily News, Sept. 22, 1913**

William A. Frantz of 19 North Tenth Street, has returned home from a weekend with friends at Mt. Gretna.

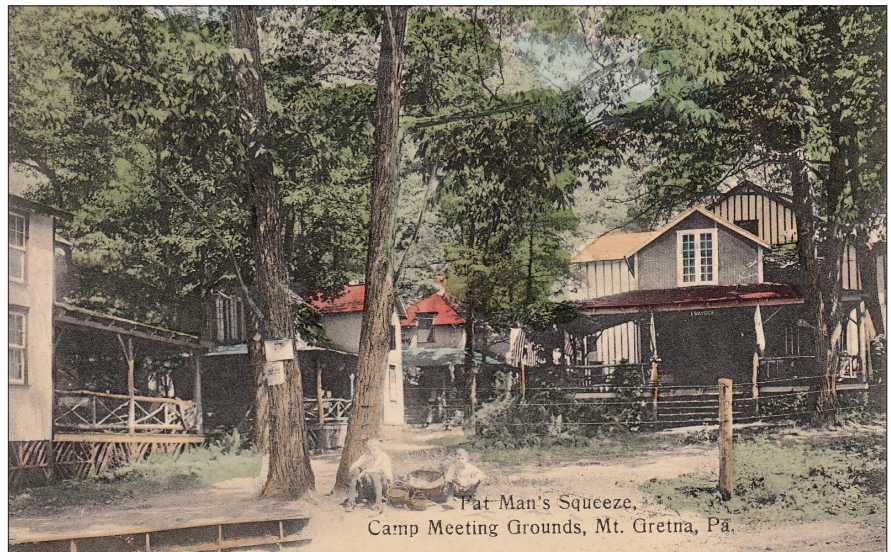
- **Lebanon Daily News, April 18, 1914**

The board of Lebanon High School class of 1910, composed of S. Allen McAdam, Sherk Miller, John Bielstine, William Harbach, Robert Shaak, and William Frantz left this afternoon for Mt. Gretna where they will spend the weekend at Mr. Frantz's Cottage, "The Wayside" on Campmeeting grounds. The group will walk from Mt. Gretna to Cornwall on Sunday afternoon, taking the train home from there. Robert Shaak, one of the guests, will leave for Gretna late this evening, walking to Cold Spring, where he will be met by the remainder of the guests.

- **Lebanon Daily News, May 15, 1922**

William A. Frantz, formerly of Lebanon and now of Harrisburg, who is at Mt. Gretna to spend the summer at his Wayside cottage in the Campmeeting grounds, has been awarded a \$10 prize at Harrisburg in a contest in which slogans of automotive dealers were published and the contestants were asked to name the dealers.

We ask our audience: Where is Fat Man's Squeeze? Do we know of any Campmeeting Cottage that was once named Wayside? Is the owner, William Frantz, listed on someone's cottage deed? Contact us with any information. (mtgretnahistory@gmail.com). 🌿



MGAHS 2021 Annual Meeting

ON JUNE 1, 2021 the Annual Meeting of the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society will be held at the Heights Community Building at 6:00 pm. Come meet our board and enjoy light refreshments. The purpose of the meeting is to invite all current dues paying members of the MGAHS to have the chance to vote for new or renewing board members to fill open positions on the board.

Each elected member of the Board of Directors shall be elected for a term of three (3) years and may stand for re-election for an additional term of three (3) years. The list of proposed directors to fill the positions are as follows:

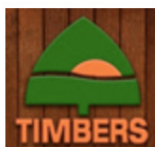
- Larry Bowman
- Margaret Hopkins
- Susan Hostetter
- Marcie Lloyd
- Robin May
- Steve Mellinger
- Chic Rhoads

If any dues paying member of the MGAHS would like to submit his/her name for consideration please send your request by **May 28, 2021** to: P.O. Box 362, 206 Pennsylvania Ave, Mt. Gretna, Pa, 17064. Include a brief explanation of your interest in participating and a contact phone number. 🌿

Thank You Thank You

BUSINESS MEMBERS (as of May 1, 2021)

We appreciate our business members. We ask you to support them and thank them for their support.



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Thank You



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Thank You

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Organ Company**



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"JUST FOR THE FAMILY FUN OF IT"

HOW TO LEAVE A LEGACY GIFT

IMAGINE what Robert Coleman would think if he could see Mount Gretna today? Many of our greatest community assets exist because someone thought it important enough to bequeath funds to develop and sustain them.

For more information on leaving a legacy gift to the Mount Gretna Area Historical Society, contact us (mtgretnahistory@gmail.com) or call us at (717) 964-1105.

Consultation with a legal or financial adviser can help you to take advantage of any savings in inheritance tax.

Our Mount Gretna Area Historical Society representative will help you through the process and the details. 



Join The Mount Gretna Area Historical Society and receive

- ✿ *Gretna Chronicles* newsletters ✿ Notice of all MGAHS events
- ✿ Discounts on events, books, DVDs and commemorative items

Yes, I want to support the Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society

☐ \$20 Individual Membership ☐ \$30 Family Membership

☐ \$75 Business Membership

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

☐ Check enclosed

(Payable to: Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society,)

☐ Master Card ☐ Visa

Card # _____

Exp. Date _____


Signature _____

Mail completed form to: The Mount Gretna Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 362, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064



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Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support MGAHS every time you shop, at no cost to you. On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) you can select Mt. Gretna Area Historical Society as your favorite charitable organization, before shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and donate a portion of the price of your eligible purchases to your selected charity. Then, for every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchase to MGAHS. This applies to your wish list, wedding or baby registries, and shopping cart items.

Remember, always start at smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. 

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Learn about our
Mount Gretna History
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