

Mount Gretna FAQ's

What is this place?

Mount Gretna has been around for over 125 years and started when Robert Coleman inherited an estate of 24,000 acres of land in Lebanon, Lancaster and York Counties. He built a railroad line from Cornwall through Colebrook and on to Elizabethtown.

He gave land to the PA National Guard in 1885 to establish an encampment, created a park (Coleman's Park (now land behind the pizza shop up to the roller rink) and dammed the Conewago Creek to form a lake. He also established a farmers' encampment/exhibition hall (now the roller rink). His railroad brought the troops and visitors to all these areas.

Between 1885 - 1935 Mount Gretna had (which no longer exist):

- Military encampment (soldiers trained for Spanish American War and WW I) Up to 10,000
- Three hotels (Conewago, Kauffman, Chautauqua Inn)
- Two amusement parks: Coleman Park, Laurel Park (built by Kauffman)
- Movie theater and dance hall
- Railroad and narrow gauge (excursion) railroad (railroad is now the Rails to Trails path)

What caused the abandonment of these things?

Advent of car - less train travel

Radio/TV

Great Depression

WWII

Soldiers moved to Fort Indiantown Gap

Jigger Shop (mid-1880's) 1963 new owner purchased and was owned by same family until 2017

What is a Chautauqua?

- Chautauqua is a vestige of the late-19th-century adult-education movement that brought programs and lecturers to rural areas. It had its beginning with the New York State community of the same name.
- Program begun in by a Sunday School teacher Lewis Miller and John Heyl Vincent to train teachers and educate the middle classes. "Education is no longer the province of the elite but must be made available to all...a process that begins at birth and continues throughout life."
- There were over two hundred Chautauquas across the United States at the turn of the century. Programs based on four pillars of religion, recreation, arts/culture and education.

What is a Campmeeting?

Formed by United Brethren for religious purposes. Mount Gretna's Campmeeting was a transplant from the Stoverdale Campmeeting (near Hummelstown). Bible camp held in summer.

These places were never meant to be fulltime residential areas.

Oldest building in Mount Gretna

Roller rink – Built in 1890 was formerly a farmers exhibition hall. It was the precursor to the PA Farm Show now located in Harrisburg

What are the different sections of Mount Gretna?

- Chautauqua (where the Visitors Center is)
- Campmeeting other side of Pinch Road (Tabernacle)
- Stoberdale (developed by Jacob Stober – main building is The Hideaway)
- The Heights (1920's-1930's Abraham Kauffman founder)
- Timber Hills (1950's - Arlo Shay developer – The Timbers restaurant and theater)
- Conewago Hill (hotel used to be there)
- TimberBridge (newer homes)

How many homes are in Mount Gretna?

Chautauqua - 202

Campmeeting - 241

Heights & Stoberdale – 80

Timber Hills, Timberbridge & Conewago Hill – approx.100

HOUSING

Total Housing Units	202 (100%)
Owner Occupied HU	94 (46.5%)
Renter Occupied HU	8 (4.0%)
Vacant Housing Units	100 (49.5%)
Median Home Value	\$182,143
Average Home Value	\$224,468

HOUSEHOLDS

Total Households	102
Average Household Size	1.89

Family Households	63
Average Family Size	2

How many permanent residents?

50% (maybe around 1,000 or less)

Three townships

South Annville
 South Londonderry
 West Cornwall

Three school districts

Annville Cleona
 Cornwall Lebanon
 Palmyra

One Borough

Chautauqua Borough has same boundaries as Chautauqua

Lake and Beach

Privately owned
 53 acres

Governance

Chautauqua Borough - has a mayor and an elected Borough Council,
 Chautauqua Board of Managers 501(c) (4) (stockholders vote – two votes per household). Owns
 HOP, Playhouse, VC, Emporium and Lodge (where Porch & Pantry is located)

Campmeeting Board of Managers (501(c) (4) – (July meeting)
 Tabernacle Association

Heights – Board of Managers

Street names

Campmeeting – named after United Brethren ministers
 Chautauqua – named after Eastern colleges
 Heights – four numbers, four trees

520 Boxholders