

## Mount Gretna FAQs

### What is this place?

Mount Gretna has been around for over 125 years and started in 1892.

Robert Coleman inherited an estate of \$7 million 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 Evangelical United Brethren for religious purposes. Mount Gretna's Campmeeting was a transplant from the Stoverdale Campmeeting (near Hummelstown). Bible camp held in summer for several weeks.

### **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 ( no "s") (hotel used to be there)
- Timber Bridge (newer homes)

**Governance – there is no one Mount Gretna governing body but three of the seven sections have governing bodies:**

### **Mount Gretna Borough (est. 1926)**

We have a mayor (currently Joe Shay)

Borough has the same boundaries as Chautauqua.

Members voted on in general election (at post office)

Enacts ordinances (parking, trash, noise, rentals) enforceable by Cornwall Borough Police

For Census data go to: <https://borough.mtgretna.com> and click on Residential

### **PA Chautauqua Board of Managers - 501 (c) (4)**

- Elected by stockholders - two votes per household
- Can make rules and regulations
- Managers of buildings, grounds and programs (Outdoor Art Show, Summer Programs)
  - Hall of Philosophy
  - Playhouse
  - Visitors Center,
  - CLSC building (tenant is Kirsch's Antiques)
  - Lodge (now Porch & Pantry)
  - Post Office

## CHAUTAUQUA/BOROUGH HOUSING(Population.193)

Total Housing Units	202 (100%)
Owner Occupied HU	121 (93.8%)
Renter Occupied HU	8 (6.2%)
Vacant Housing Units	93 (41.9%)
Median Home Value	\$316,200
Average Home Value	\$283,300

## HOUSEHOLDS

Total Households	129
Average Household Size	2.09
Family Households	101
Average Family Size	2.28

*2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

### **PA Chautauqua Foundation – 501(c) (3)**

- Charitable organization formed to support the mission of the Board of Managers
- Members nominated and approved by Board of Managers
- Foundation also owns a portion of Soldiers Field (18.7 acres) across the road bordered by Rt. 117 and Timber Road.

### **Mount Gretna Authority (est. 1974)**

- Provides sewer services to Mount Gretna portions of South Londonderry Township, Mount Gretna Borough, West Cornwall Township
- Provides water to Mount Gretna Borough residents

### **Campmeeting Board of Managers - 501(c) (4) (West Cornwall)**

- Tabernacle Association (501 (c) (3)
- Community Library

### **Heights Board of Managers & West Cornwall Twp**

### **Timber Hills, TimberBridge and Conewago Hill (South Londonderry Twp)**

### **How many homes are in Mount Gretna?**

#### **Currently**

Chautauqua (65 acres) – 202 homes

Campmeeting (30 acres) – 241 homes

Heights & Stoberdale – approx. 80 homes

Timber Hills, Timberbridge & Conewago Hill – approx.100+ homes

#### **In 1892 (first year established)**

30 cottages

85 cottages

### **How many permanent residents?**

Approximately 50%

#### **Three townships**

South Annville

South Londonderry

West Cornwall

#### **Three school districts**

Annville Cleona

Palmyra

Cornwall Lebanon

#### **Lake and Beach**

Privately owned land

53 acres on north side of 117 includes lake up to Butler Road, mini-golf course, pizza shop and roller rink

#### **Street names**

Campmeeting – most east/west streets named after United Brethren ministers

Chautauqua – most streets named after Eastern colleges

Heights – four numbers, five trees (Locust, Pine, Maple, Birch, Oak)

#### **Post Office**

520 Boxholders

South of 117 must have PO Box = zip code 17064

North of 117 can choose to have mail delivered = Lebanon zip code 17042 or may choose to have a Mount Gretna PO Box= zip code 17064