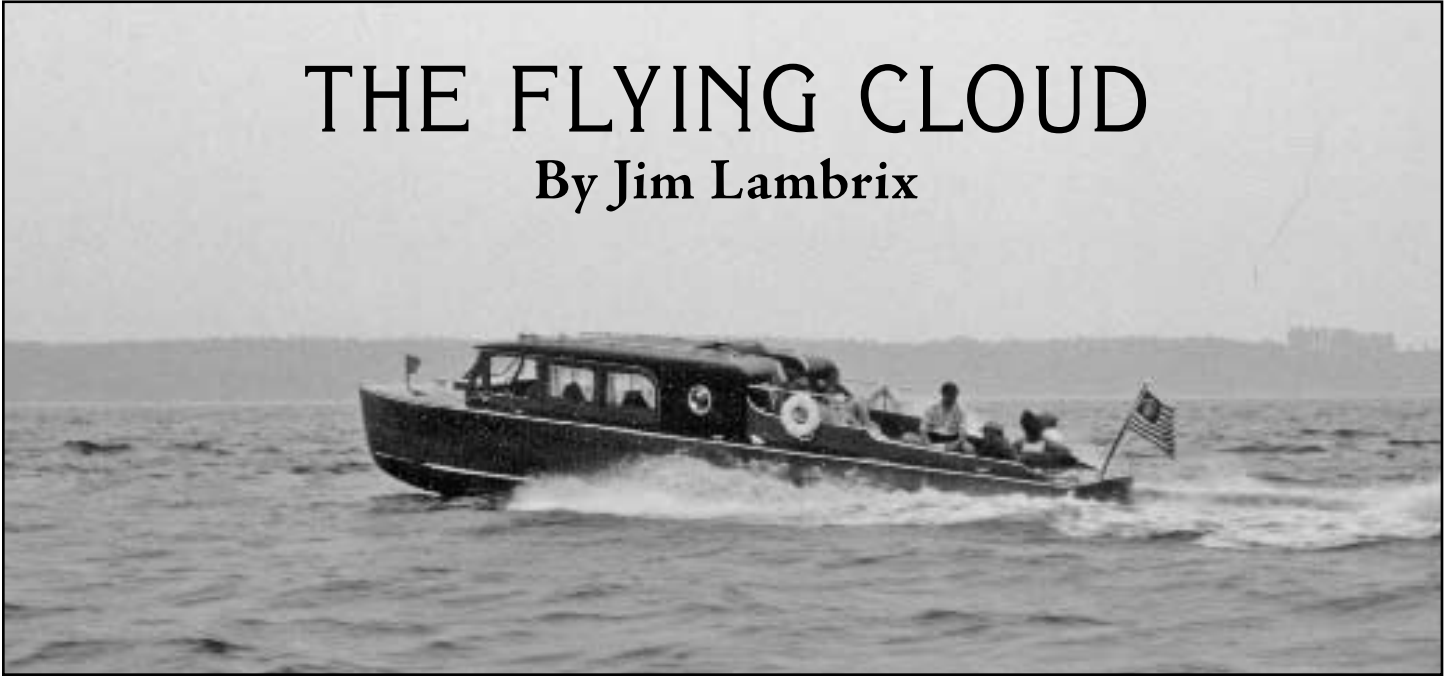




THE FLYING CLOUD

By Jim Lambrix



Who remembers the old dirty white asbestos sided boathouse located just south of the Pentwater Yacht Club (PYC)? One may recall this tired old structure from the water side having several unpainted garage doors, each being held open with the assistance of an external block and tackle suspended from 2 x 4's which extended out over the water. My recollection of this building was the view from the PYC dock, where the boathouse doors were always slightly tilted up out of the water except when a boat was in use and then the doors were left open. In the late 60's the building was purchased by the PYC and raised to permit the instillation of additional docks for member boats.

This article is not being written to discuss the demise of an old boathouse, but rather to tell the story of a particular boat it sheltered for nearly two decades. This boat

was a long wooden commuter style cruiser which took up residency in the northern most slip of the boathouse sometime in the mid-20th century and remained there until the boathouse was demolished.

Her owner was Mr. Emmett Roche, proprietor of both the Hart and Pentwater movie theaters. The year was either

late 1951 or early 1952 and Mr. Roche had just purchased the boat from Mrs. Florence Welsh, owner of the Oceana County Savings Bank and resident of Hart, MI.

According to Stewart Roche, Emmett's son, Mr. Welsh had passed away in September of 1951 and the boat was being sold

as a result. In addition, Stewart Roche was also the son-in-law of Florence and Clarence Welsh, having married their daughter Elizabeth, "Bette" in 1942. He was an attorney by training and went on to become President of the

(Continued on next page.)



Oceana County Savings Bank. This would seem to be an easy transaction for a buyer and seller living in the same community and knowing each as they well as they did. However, the boat was stored indoors at a marina located on Palm Beach Island, FL. Mr. Welsh had kept the boat at the marina for many years after purchasing it while vacationing there in the mid to late 1930's. Thus, the new owner had to arrange to have the ChrisCraft Company of Holland, MI trailer the boat back to Pentwater to be docked inside the boathouse.

My recollection of the boat was of a sun bleached and somewhat weathered appearance of what once was a beautiful, varnished mahogany planked hull. Though not modern for the day, it projected a classy statement when you saw her

boat house just south of the PYC dock. Her exhaust gurgled like a well-tuned Harley Davidson and when the skipper shifted from reverse to forward, the boat, with a 8' beam, would begin to move effortlessly through the water with little to no bow wave. As the throttle was increased the bow would rise, the stern would settle down and the boat would generally head out the channel to the Big Lake. That same graceful process took place many times each summer and would continue for many years. Stewart Roche stated the boat could reach nearly 40 mph.

When the old boathouse was purchased by the Yacht Club, the boat was moved to a dock at the end of Third Street behind the Pentwater Community Hall on Pentwater Lum-

ber Company property. Sometime during the early to mid-70s, the boat disappeared. I was not around Pentwater much after 1974 and I never thought about the boat again until about three years ago when one day I asked myself, "I wonder what happened to that old boat?" That's when I googled the name of the last person I knew who had owned her. To the kids growing up in Pentwater, this boat was always just known as Mr. Roche's boat as I don't recall a name painted on the transom. To be sure of this fact, I contacted Stewart Roche, who is now 100 years old and still

lives independently in Hart with his second wife. I asked him if he recalled the boat's name. He said he did not recall it having one.



Cruising along with Al Capone sitting in the stern.

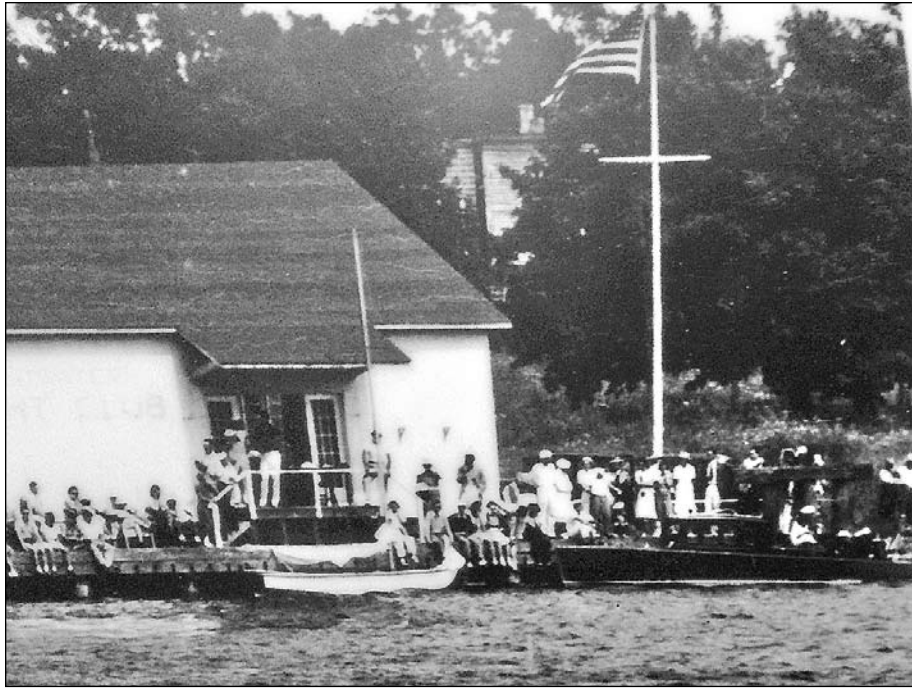
cruise by. Thus, one did not forget this craft as there was no other like her in our small harbor or any harbor for that matter. I was never inside the boat, but one can see from pictures she was a very elegant craft constructed of solid mahogany and finished off with many coats of clear varnish which highlighted the natural beauty of the exotic wood. The only portion of the boat not varnished was the cabin top and sides which were covered in black leather. Finally, the leather roof surrounded two large port and starboard opera windows which completed her elegant styling. There is no question this boat was hand built to satisfy the taste and ego of someone very special. She was a floating limousine! (I was told when the boat finally arrived for restoration the interior was completely intact including the original gold plated razors which still rested in the containers made especially to hold them.)

This unique boat made quite an impact on me as a young child because I can still recall the sound of the engine starting and see the stern of the 36' boat slowly emerge from the



The interior was as spectacular as the outside.

Well, surprisingly, it took just two clicks on google to locate the boat. That's when I discovered the she had a name, having been christened as "Flying Cloud." In addition, "Flying Cloud" had a history. She was built in 1928 for the Olds family, a Lansing, Michigan automobile manufacture who wintered in Florida, had her trailered from Michigan to Florida and back again to Michigan the two years they owned her.



That's the Flying Cloud at the Yacht Club dock.

Flying Cloud was sold to another winter resident of the Miami Beach area who owned her for two more years. Unfortunately, this second owner got in trouble with The Bureau of Internal Revenue and the boat was seized along with several other assets. (It would appear the second owner never recovered from his encounter with the Fed's because he ended up living in public housing for nearly the rest of his life.)

So, for several years, Flying Cloud was impounded somewhere in the Miami Beach area until the government was permitted to sell off the seized assets. That is when the boat was purchased by Mr. Welsh.

Flying Cloud spent more than 20 years on the waterfront in our small Village of Pentwater without it ever having a name.....Maybe for good reason! The second owner who got in trouble with The Bureau of Internal Revenue-----, well his name----- was-----Al Capone! When the Welsh's purchased the boat, they were told that she had once been owned by gangsters. However, they were not told it was the worst gangster of them all, Scarface!

If you would like to know more about "Flying Cloud" there

will be a display including pictures, period newspaper articles and a recent magazine article about the history of this boat at the Museum this coming summer.

After Emmett Roche passed in 1977, the boat was sold several times to people who each intended on restoring the now tired old boat. Finally, after many years and several hopeful owners, "Flying Cloud" was purchased and was finally restored to her former beauty. She has since been sold twice and is presently held in a private collection somewhere out east.

Wouldn't it be great to have this boat visit Pentwater for the Summer Sesquicentennial?

Stewart stated he did not have much interest in the boat during the time he had access to it because while everyone else on board was having fun, he always was the one who got stuck driving.

During our conversation he told me of an adventure he and other family members took with the boat in 1946. This adventure began in Stuart, FL. and followed the recently completed (1937) Okeechobee Waterway across Florida, linking the Atlantic Ocean with the Gulf of Mexico. Then once reaching the Gulf, they would motor down Florida's southwest coast to Key West and

then back up to Palm Beach Island. There were two things he remembers most about the trip. One being the mosquitoes were terrible while moored on Lake Okeechobee and the other being some concern the craft's single engine might fail while motoring in Gulf of Mexico. Thus, the craft and passengers would drift toward Texas, never to be heard from again!

DUES NOTICE

Dues are on a calendar year basis and 2017 invoices for Annual Members and Sustaining Members were mailed in October. Dues invoices for 2016 Delinquent Members were also mailed in October.

DUES ARE DUE

Membership dues for 2017 are due.

If you see "16" following your name on the mailing label it is time to renew your membership. The dues amounts are shown on the Membership Application Form on the last page of the newsletter.

Please send your check to:

Pentwater Historical Society
PO Box 54, Pentwater, MI 49449

The Village of Pentwater Celebrates Its Sesquicentennial

Pentwater kicks off the 150th anniversary celebration on **March 16, 2017.**

In 2017 we will look back at the days gone by with the "THROUGHOUT THE YEARS" theme that will showcase our village pride with new and expanded activities!

• **March 16, The Sesquicentennial Dinner.**

This event will feature guest speakers, dinner and a slideshow of the Village of Pentwater titled: "Throughout the Years" at the Pentwater Friendship Center.

• **May 6, The 2nd Annual Founder's Day.**

There will be fantastic exhibits, speakers, activities and more to take you back in time to the 1800s.

• **June 4, The 21st Annual Start of Summer Party.**

Each table will represent a decade reflecting the "Throughout the Years" theme. There will be music, dancing, food, period costumes, and fun.

• **August 7-13, The 87th Pentwater Homecoming.**

There will be activities with period costumes, new floats, "Throughout the Years" slideshow, bigger and better fireworks, and more!

Updates can be found at: www.pentwater.org

The Village asks for your help!

A DVD is being created to show Pentwater "Throughout the Years". If you would like to send some of your own videos/snapshots please email them to: travelinfo@pentwater.org or cjhodan@gmail.com

They will be available for purchase in 2017.

Other tokens will also be available in 2017.

We would like to expand on our 2017 firework displays.

You can contribute at anytime throughout the year.

Here are a few different ways to help:

Donate Online! www.pentwater.org

OR Drop it off at the Chamber mail slot in their door.
or stop in at the Village Hall at 324 S. Hancock St.

OR mail a contribution to:

Pentwater Village Hall
PO Box 614, Pentwater, MI 4944

We Get Letters . . .

Coming to Pentwater provides a great time for young and old. Sitting on the beach, playing in the water, or watching the sunset, can be enjoyed by vacationers of all ages.

Coming to Pentwater is a special treat for my family. Every time we come my dad takes us out to eat for brunch. Some of our favorites are Garden Café, The Ice Cream Parlor, and just recently we added Gull Landing to the list. Right after breakfast we head to the cottage or we peek in our favorite shops which include Silver Lake antiques, The Lemonade stand, and Oldewick.

Swimming is usually a must do. My sister and I enjoy jumping waves, digging holes, and playing on the rocks next to the pier. (And then going home to my mom's wonderful dinners.) The playground is a great place to play. My sister and I think so!

Going fishing on my Grandpa's boat with my cousins is a blast. Once, my uncle caught a fish. He put it in a cooler and saved it for dinner. Eating it I tried to ignore the fact that it had been a live fish just hours before.

The library is one of my favorite places to be, (besides the beach of course.) I always leave with my arms filled with books.

I love Old Baldy. It's quite a hike to climb all the stairs, but running down the dune is worth the hike.

My family loves coming to Pentwater, and so do I.

Tatiana

Tatiana is a 7th Grader at Plymouth Christian School in Grand Rapids.

2016-2017 OFFICERS & TRUSTEES OF THE PENTWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dick Warner President	Roger MacLeod V-President	Joan Gehringer Secretary	Mike Castor Treasurer
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MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR Sally Ouweneel	TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR Mark Shotwell	MUSEUM DIRECTOR Ed Bigelow	MARKETING DIRECTOR Jim Lambrix
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TRUSTEES: Bill O'Donnell, Bob Childers and Deb Deward

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Amy Vander Zwart	Jim Pikaart	Bruce Bates
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Take a Tour of Pentwater!

Introducing the *PENTWATER HISTORICAL HOME TOURS* Book!

Have you ever stopped while on the quaint streets of Pentwater to think that you may be walking down the same path a killer took to get his vengeance, that you could be stepping into the building where a fire, which wiped out the entire town, began, or you could be visiting a home where a stranger was given shelter and medical care only to begin a smallpox outbreak which would kill many people? Did you ever stop to wonder what could have occurred in your own home back in the early days of Pentwater?

Find those answers and more in the Historical Walking Tour of Pentwater! This full colored tour has detailed maps, pictures, and descriptions of historical people and events of the village.

Think you know all there is to know about Pentwater and its history? See if you can match the clues shown below with the homes in which they occurred:



- This home was once owned by Hart Hospital.
- The family of this home welcomed a stranger in only to lose three members of their family to the smallpox outbreak of 1871.
- The owner of this home was shot point blank while trying to tar and feather a man.
- A past owner of this home died on the exact day she was born 100 years later.
- This home was ordered from a catalog.
- This home claims to have the first indoor toilet in Pentwater.
- The "most appalling sextuple crime" occurred in this home.
- One of the homemakers who lived here ingested poison eight months after her husband was killed in a boiler explosion.
- A past owner of this home attended college with President William McKinley.

Can't match them all? You may want to grab a copy of the *HISTORICAL HOME TOURS* as soon as possible as only a limited amount will be printed!

They're being printed right now!

Sales and Price Info Available January 2017 at:
info@pentwaterhistoricalsociety.org



78 E. Second



180 E. Lowell



174 S. Wythe



378 S. Rutledge



438 E. Lowell



90 W. First



149 Dover



284 E. Lowell

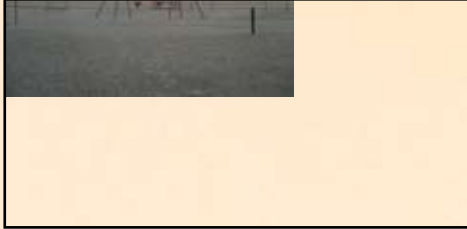


188 S. Carroll

What's Happ'n in the Village.

See something going on in the Village?

Grab your camera, take a photo and send it with a brief description to the Pentwater Historical Society at:
info@pentwaterhistoricalsociety.org

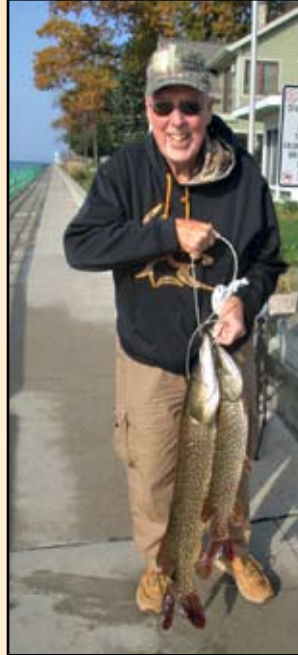


The snow fencing is up and ready for winter in this dramatic sunset photo at Mears State Park.

October visitors enjoy camping in their neat little "Happier Camper" trailer.



PHS member Roger MacLeod with Northern Pike caught out of the channel by his home. The big Pike weighed 13 pounds and 40" long!



Pentwater High School Ladies Volleyball Team won the District Tournament for the fourth consecutive year!



After a big storm this unusual Sturgeon was found washed up on the beach.



The Baptist Church removed two oak trees in preparation for replacing the food pantry with a larger building.

Time to Put the Kettle On!

"There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea."

Henry James,
The Portrait of a Lady

On an overcast day, the interior of the Memory House was anything but dreary. With exquisite décor, mouthwatering treats, and lavish hats, the mood was jovial and the company was like a ray of sunshine. To peer through the window, one may forget the dark clouds outside as the inside teemed with life!

The tables were elegantly covered in fresh linens and displayed fragrant flowers. The fresh, picturesque food, beautifully displayed on delicate platters, included tea sandwiches with sesame ginger chicken, cucumber avocado, ham radish, arugula pesto, and turkey along with a strawberry spinach salad and fresh fruit.



A variety of teas from Spice Merchants of Grand Rapids was offered in vintage tea cups along with homemade desserts which included; pumpkin pie, cinnamon buns prepared Roisen style, Mrs. Roiesen's lemon bars, and a variety of chocolate chip, sugar, raisin, and caramel apple cookies.

Before the delectable food and teas, the ladies were treated to a personal tour of the Memory House on Park Street. Debby and Mark Roisen encouraged the exploration of the nooks and crannies of their personal home and made everyone feel welcomed. The entire event began at 1pm on Saturday, September 10, 2016. The time of afternoon tea not only warmed bellies, but warmed hearts as well and our gratitude continues to extend to the Roisen's and the ladies who made this event the success it was by attending!

Museum Receives Donated Items



Oceana County book of maps from 1885 and a County Road Map from 1948. Donated by Paul Lovell.



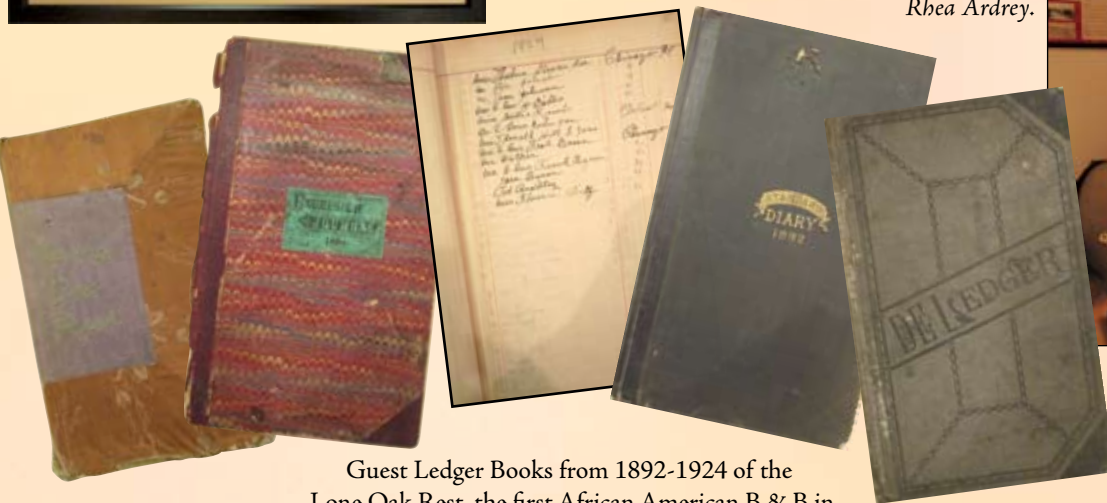
Framed Paper Flour Sack from the Nickerson & Collister Flour Mill in Pentwater. It held a gross weight of 49 pounds. Donated by Tom Vander Zanden



Stephanie Master donated a bench in memory of her parents Charles Jr. & Elsie Master and her aunt Elizabeth Peterhans, wife of Dave Peterhans who is seated on the bench. Stephanie is in the middle of the family photo taken at the presentation of the bench.



Pentwater High School 1953 cheerleading outfit, worn and donated by Rhea Ardrey.



Guest Ledger Books from 1892-1924 of the Lone Oak Rest, the first African American B & B in Pentwater. Donated by Jennifer Davis.



Pillow printed with G. T. Sands house. WWII era. Donated by Phillip Syer.



Two Joe Pike Memorial Corvette Caps Circa 1990's Donated by Stanley Roose.



Desk Monitor of temperature & humidity. Manufactured for the "Hilton Concrete Company" of Pentwater and used in waterproofing masonry. Circa 1950's. Donated by Tom Lambrix

MUSEUM REPORT FALL 2016

By Ed Bigelow, PHS Museum Director

Museum visitor attendance for the 2016 season was very good! Beginning in early May with several groups of visitors through October, we have had 935 visitors to the museum. Our museum visitors came from a total of twenty states ranging from as far West as California and from New York in the East; up from Texas and down from Minnesota. Also, visitors came from as far away as Budapest, Hungary and Bogota, Columbia.

From 2007 through 2013, over a seven year period, a total of 3,484 visitors came to the old museum located in the lower level of Pentwater Community building. For the past three years, 2014 through 2016, our new museum had a total of 3,565 visitors. Having our own PHS Building and Museum location is paying off in sharing Pentwater's rich

history! Prior to our new location, for the seven year period, we averaged 498 visitors a year. For the past three year period, we have averaged 1188 visitors a year, a very significant increase. Much of the success we have had at our museum can be attributed to the excellent artifact displays that our curator Dick Warner has skillfully arranged to match the various themes throughout the museum. Dick will have many new artifact displays to enjoy in 2017!

Again this year, we have received many new artifacts, which will enable our museum to be refreshed with a new look for the visitors in 2017. A BIG THANK YOU to Amy LaBarge for her diligence in arranging for the many volunteer people it takes to serve as museum hosts and their willingness to welcome everyone to Pentwater's rich history!



Mary Catherine Bowen plays the 1889 Story Clark Pump Organ. 46 people have played music on this organ since it was donated to the museum.



Glenn Beavis and Jim Gehringer reattaching the roof rain gutter on the South side of the museum.



Information and Technology center located in the balcony now has four new comfortable rolling swivel chairs donated by Dick and Sylvia Warner!

Museum Hosts: The Key to Our Future Success!

Will You Help in 2017?

Sincere gratitude goes out to 31 PHS members who served as museum hosts in 2016!

Whether you took multiple 3-hour shifts or just a few, your help is genuinely appreciated. You made it possible for us to open our doors so that over 900 visitors browsed our collection this season.

We are looking for more PHS members to volunteer to host in 2017. (Public hours will again be 1-4 p.m. on Tuesday-Saturday during June-August, and Thursday-Saturday during September and October).

Hosting is easy and interesting. A smile and a hello is all it takes. You will have the privilege of greeting some familiar faces that may have a deep connection to Pentwater as well as some faces that are new to you. You may walk away learning more from the visitors about our Village

or making a new connection! In 2017, we will again offer museum host training. Our goal is to have free WIFI connection to the Internet available for hosts and other museum volunteers.

If you haven't already done so, please view the video tour of the Museum that's posted on the lower half of the PHS Website at: pentwaterhistoricalsociety.org

The video scratches the surface of Pentwater's history over the past 150 years. It provides an overview of exhibit areas, takes a closer look at some items, and tells a few stories that even those who consider themselves Pentwater veterans may not know. It's a good way for hosts to feel comfortable with what's on display.

If you can be a museum host in 2017, please send an e-mail to Amy LaBarge, who trains new volunteers and coordinates the overall hosting schedule. Use this special e-mail address: phsmuseumvolunteers@gmail.com. Or give her a call at 313-268-2086.

**Garage
SALE!**

**Participate in
Pentwater's Annual Garage Sale!**

Simplify your life! Get rid of that stuff!

Bring those treasures you no longer need and we'll sell them for you at the PHS GARAGE SALE

Bring those treasures starting January to the Museum. The BIG SALE is on June 10, 2017. That old coffee mug in the back of your cupboard that has not seen the light of day in years just may be what the person down the street has been looking for!

Help a good cause and help yourself by donating!

Contact: Debbie Deward 231-869-2230 and Ed Bigelow 231-869-8631

The Historical Society will have postcards, historical memorabilia and other items for sale!

The Pentwater Sequicentennial Celebration

Homecoming in Pentwater is going to be special in 2017 and PHS is participating in many areas including the Homecoming Parade!

PHS is an Official Sponsor of:

THE PENTWATER SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

We are planning to have a float in the Pentwater Homecoming Parade!

(Just Because We Love a Parade!)

*Yaaaaay!
It's a Parade!*

•Anyone have a flatbed trailer?

Know someone who has one?

We need to borrow it about a couple weeks before the parade, or sooner!

**•Wanna volunteer to help
make a float? Call Debbie
Deward at 231-869-2230.**

*Grab your
Paint Brush!*

**•Wanna volunteer to walk
the parade? You get to hand
out free PHS giveaways!**

*Yaaaaay!
FREE STUFF!*

**•Wanna volunteer to be
on the float? You get to wear
your funny "old fashioned"
period clothes!**

*Yaaaaay!
Wear your hat!
Wave your hankie!*

**•So call Deb Deward to volunteer
or with questions. 231-869-2230**

*Come On..
Call Her!*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

•SPRING DINNER •4th ANNIVERSARY •PANCAKE BREAKFAST •SUMMER DINNER

Wednesday, May 24, 2017 Saturday, May 27, 2017 Sunday, June 25, 2017 Wednesday, August 23, 2017

Bigger, Better, Greater-What's Next?

Dear Pentwater Historical Society Member:

We are a self-funded organization run by a dedicated group of volunteers. Over the past 10 years, this group has accomplished so much! For years, a new location was just a vision. That vision became a reality with a new home for our members and an exciting location for our museum. Thousands of hours have been expended to make an historic old church building into a place called our new home, a place our membership calls our museum, a place of pride for the people of Pentwater. Our local community, both full time and part time summer residents, has worked together, stepping forward with time, effort, artifacts, and money to make the museum a reality.

Now, does our Society need to discover what part of that vision it can give back to the rest of the community? Isn't giving back the only way our museum will continue to be one of the shining points of light in our tiny Village? Is the creation of a museum the last step in telling our story, the final chapter to our mission? Is our mission solely to house a few old treasures? Can a museum be like grandma's old closet; a place one puts things that have memories, but have become useless? Can a museum actually become an artifact in its own right? Once viewed, will its collections become a, "Oh seen that -- done that, I won't need to go back there for another 5 years?" Can our Society afford to let that happen? Will changing our featured exhibits periodically, draw in new visitors? Yes, we need to continue putting on wonderful community dinners featuring knowledgeable speakers

whom share a little piece of history. Yes, we need to sell memberships, calendars and have volunteers welcoming people into our museum home. But is that enough to ensure continuity and sustainability or do we need more?

At the present time the Pentwater Historical Society's shining light is glowing brightly in our Village. Those who originally dreamed of our museum are still dreaming, still helping and still cheering this Society on. They are constantly recruiting new members and are busy helping sort the new artifacts and planning for the next event. This takes time and effort and is being done by just a few. I ask you this; can our Society give back to the community in ways that will cause more people of all ages to become involved in the Museum and Historical Society? Does our Society need to reach out into the community and sponsor events which bring more people to the community during the summer, maybe even during the off season, which will help make it a vibrant, active and alive organization?

Does the Society need to be more than the sum of its museum building and artifacts? If not, could we someday find ourselves looking for a museum to house our museum? Therefore, I am reaching out to the Society Membership for suggestions on how this organization can be more involved in the community in needed and lasting ways. Please accept this article as an invitation for open written discussion to that end. Your thoughts and comments will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Jim Lambrix,
Marketing

NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

Julie & Mark Jessop Beth & Bob Marine
Judy & Bob Vander Zwart

CONVERSION OF ANNUAL MEMBER TO SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Louise & Glenn Beavis Carolyn & Robert Comrlisen
Joan & Jim Gehringer Eleanor & Stuart Hartger
Cyndy & George Mikuyuk Joyce & Edwin Ricketson

CONVERSION OF ANNUAL MEMBER TO PATRON MEMBER

Amy & Ryan Vander Zwart

CONVERSION OF SUSTAINING MEMBER TO LIFE MEMBER

Charles Smith

DONATIONS

Reser Family
Richard & Sylvia Warner
Stephanie Masters

MEMORIALS

FROM: IN MEMORY OF:

Dolly Geers Ted Reser
David Evans Marcia Evans
Ted & Joan Cuchna Charles Lipke

HONORARIUMS

FROM: DEDICATED TO:

Charles & Carol Emmons Bill & Sharon O'Donnell

Bob's CORNER

(by Bob (Childers), of course)

After the talk about the history of a lighthouse at the Historical Soci-

ety fall dinner meeting, I was motivated to take pen in hand in order to enlighten all you good people on the stuff I had in my notes holding off for a possible future article.

So, the future is now. Ok, so you want to design and build a lighthouse. Cool, just get you a large sheet of paper or a couple of large sheets of paper, a couple of pencils and a ruler. "But why can't I just go to Google and get all the information needed there?" Not so fast there pal. Google did not exist back when most of the lighthouses around the Great Lakes were built so we can't use that. Like I said, paper, pencils and a ruler but through my wonderful generosity I just so happen to have this here magic formula you can use, $d = 1.17 \text{ times the } \sqrt{\text{of } H}$. Now with that in hand, go for it. What? You want more details? Ugh! What I do for my readers!

Construction. For effectiveness the lamp must be high enough to be seen before the ship winds up on the rocks, the shoal, sandbar, etc. If the light is too high above the shore, it will always be in the clouds or fog and won't help anyone. The minimum height is calculated by the trigonometric formula above. H is the height above the water in feet, and the d is the distance to the horizon in nautical miles. There's a whole bunch of stuff on lighthouses built on bluffs, or; mountain topos out in the water away from land but since we don't have any of those around here I won't get into that. "Ok, I'm gonna design me a lighthouse but why are they always round?" Well, they're not always round. A lighthouse could be a bunch of different shapes. There are square lighthouses, Ludington Light, for example. There is pyramid or triangular shaped lights but none around the Great Lakes. That doesn't answer my question why are most lights I see round? Would you believe it has to do with the oak tree? The early designers saw how oaks stand up in high wind providing they had good anchors and took it from there.

"I want to dig me a big hole and start building!" Cool, but how are you going to "anchor" your light in the sand we have around here? If it isn't anchored securely it's going to fall over in the first severe wind storm which isn't cool. Everyone knows really tall buildings have a solid anchor usually going down to bedrock. One ever so slight problem . . . We ain't got no bedrock around here. Sand yes, bedrock, no. You dig down 20 feet, 200 feet or even 2000 feet all you will find is sand. Ok, now we know it's going to be built in sand where do we go from there? Usually an anchor has to

do with pouring a cement footing of some sort deep, deep in a hole and driving pilings down to the footing deep enough to withstand whatever the Lake throws at our light. Another method is a screw-in anchor. Kind of like a bunch of very big woodscrews screwed deep into the sand.

With our anchor now firmly in place, let's start building! "There's a couple of brick company's around here, let's use their brick." Ok fine but one small problem there. The brick around here is known a "cream brick." Why? Because it's so soft. That's why Big Sable light is sheathed in iron. The same iron they use on boilerplates. Keep it painted and it will last a couple of lifetimes.

Now with our lighthouse well on it's way to being built, where is the lighthouse keeper going to live? Depending on the light, a lighthouse keeper and his family lived in a house attached to the light tower in some way or a short distance away. Remember, it was better for the keeper if the house was attached to the light. After all this was a year 'round 24/7 job. Walking a long distance to service the light in what the Lake had to throw at you in the winter ain't fun. Little Sable light does not have an attached house but a separate house. At some of the larger lights there might be an assistant lighthouse keeper in residence.

Now we are going to need a Fresnel lens for our light. The lens are measured by first order, second order, etc. This meant how much of a reflective power the lens had. First order was the brightest. Before electricity the rotation of the light was driven by a weight driven mechanism that had to be rewound every two hours throughout the night. Every morning the lighthouse keeper had to climb the steps to the light and meticulously clean the carbon stains the oil lamp left inside the lens. Needless to say electric lights saved a bunch of work. In time, mechanical strobe lights replaced the Fresnel lens and oil lamp. Eventually mechanical strobes were replaced by rotating aerobeacons like airports have which required very little to no maintenance.

Pentwater channel light used something like a 4th, 5th or 6th order light. Then there are range lights. These usually marked the entrance to a channel. Ok, so you're out on the pond and you see two lights. It's a simple matter of lining up the two lights until you only see one light an there you are at your channel entrance.

There's a bunch more stuff I could tell you about lighthouses. Luckily I had this much stuff squirreled away to write this article. Later I will get into the actual maintenance of the foghorn and the engine house and the day-to-day work of a lighthouse keeper. Oh, if you're interested there were several female keepers.

USE THIS FORM TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE PENTWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Would you like to be contacted to participate in society activities? If so, your area of interest is: _____

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HISTORIC PENTWATER HOTELS



The old Arbor Rest Hotel and later the Verbeck Tavern stood where the Post Office is now and took up the complete block. A very popular vacation destination, guests arrived by boat or train and stayed for weeks. Rates were \$3.50 to \$4.50 daily and started at \$17.50 a week per person.



The Old Clendee Hotel was on the S.E. corner of First Street and Hancock.

Imus House Hotel stood where the Police, the C of C and the Shelby State Bank is presently located.



A fine group of characters are hanging out on the porch of the Imus House.

The ladies in white most likely are staff. Clothing styles looks like the 1920's



PENTWATER
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