PENTWATER PRIDE

Rentware,

PAST\*PRESENT\*PROMISED!

WINTER NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2022



### The Clubhouse Vacations for the Intellectual

n the south side of the piers are sweeping grasses spattered over smooth shimmering sand dunes. Most visitors are not privy to this view except from a boat on Lake Michigan. This area is known as the Oceana Beach Association

and is a private area organized in the late 1800's.

The association was started by four gentlemen. Three were from Chicago and one was a lawyer from Washington DC; Judge Montgomery, who sat on the Customs Court of Appeals. They were likely some of the most influential people in Pentwater at the time. The first meeting of the association was held in August of 1892 at Sands and Maxwell Lumber Com-



pany office. There it was decided that the association was "corporations for summer homes, for camp meetings, for meeting of assemblies or associations and societies organized for intellectual and scientific culture and for the promotion of the cause of religion and morality for any or all such purposes". The association was begun as a great marketing scheme to bring more money into the area by making an exclusive get away where the elite would vacation.

#### By Amy Vander Zwart and Daniel Hoekstra Sr.

The association began with four cottages built by Mr. Fincher. By 1902 the Club House was built. The Club House was originally for renters to enjoy until the building of the Annex and Casino in 1912-1916. With these buildings came a caretaker known as

"Old Mr. Pool". He began with a seasonal wage of \$5 and by 1903 his rate had doubled! Owners of the cottages would leave notes for the caretaker to attend to before the opening of the cottages in the summer months.

Once the Annex was built to accommodate renters, the Club House was used for the overflow of family members of the owners of the cottages as well as association dining. The Casino (Continued on next page.)



The back of the Clubhouse





A walkway ran along the dune for access to cottages and stairs to beach.

was used as a gathering place. People joined together for meetings, card games, bingo, and discussions of an intellectual nature. (picture the movie, "Dirty Dancing")

The OBA was not limited to the four original cottages. As time marched on, a total of 26 cottages were built. The names of the houses were The Glenn. Heavenly Twin, The 2nd Heavenly Twin, Judge Montgomery House, Charles Ayers Cottage, The Driftwood, The Kleinhaus (Uncle Jake and Aunty Em), Points of Pines (McCoy House), The Albert White, The B.O. Sands house. Judge Chapman's son built a house next to his father. Willam Durant House and then he built a cottage for his mother next door. Additionally there was The Buckbee house, Judge Carten's house, The Mix House, The Helen McCoy Grab home, Don Hawthorne home, and finally a rental called the Clubhouse Cottage.

When the Association first opened it had a windmill pump. If there was not any wind blowing, people would have to carry buckets down to Pentwater Lake to fill them and carry them up to the home.

OBA was located just to the west of the Pentwater Railroad Depot which was located just south of were the channel begins. The trains would be backed up from Hart in reverse to drop off freight and passengers. There was a bridge across the channel at the time, but it was rarely used by the OBA members who preferred using a ferry boat that began at the docks of the Railroad Depot and landed near where the Pentwater Yacht Club property stands. Cars frequently used the bridge to get into town but if the ferry or the bridge were both out of operation, it was a 5 mile trek into town.

Buildings were on the top of the dune with many steps to the beach.

The walkways ran in front of the cottages along the dunes and served as "main street" for easy access visiting fellow members and stairways to the beach. At night they were lit by lanterns and candles until 1912 when electricity came to the association. Two young lads oversaw lighting the pathways. The lanterns were extingushed at 10:30 and if you were out past that time, you were past curfew. The rules were that you had to have all boats at the dock at 10:00 pm and everyone in their cottages by 10:30.

Residents remember the time when there were no sand dunes in their way, and they could see the kids frolicking in the big lake. Some of the fondest memories for the kids were watching the Coast Guard do their weekly drills in the channel. They would tip their launch over and then (Continued on page 10.)





# Museum News

By Dan Hoekstra, Museum Director

#### HREE NEW EXHIBITS ARE BEING FINALIZED FOR THE 2022 SEASON.

These exhibits will appeal to all ages. The first exhibit will be a walk down memory lane from the channel to the top of Old Baldy right inside the Museum. Two other exhibits feature the history of the Police and Fire Departments with a special remembrance of John Sayles, the only Pentwater fireman to lose his life while on duty. You will want to come in and check all that is new this summer!

**SEEKING VOLUNTEERS** We are always seeking people that have a heart for history and would like to help with exhibit setup and design; docents who have a little time to give; and a myriad of other projects that need people power. It doesn't matter if you have an hour or a day to give, your time will be welcomed and appreciated.

### STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

PHS has been blessed this year with teenage volunteers from Pentwater school. These young people have been a great help and have been able to collect volunteer

hours. It has been a win-win!



Aiden Shotwell volunteers at the Museum.

We are looking forward to a great 40th Anniversary of the Pentwater Historical Society this year! Thanks to all, past and present, that have made this a great organization.

#### **Red Barn Update** By Norm Shotwell

**PRESERVING THE RED BARN** The PHS learned recently that the Barn

Preservation group and the local Michigan Conservation District is interested in preserving the Red Barn in its current location. A group is being formed through efforts of the Community Foundation of Oceana

County. PHS will be represented in this group.

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The Historical Society and the local Arts Council are in the early stages of planning an arts competition focused



The Red Barn was built by Charles Mears for access to river, village and Lake Michigan.

on the Red Barn. Details are being developed including whether the project would occur in 2022 or 2023.

## Have you Seen it?

**IT'S TRUE . . .** The Pentwater Historical Society and Museum spends a lot of time focusing on the past, but that doesn't mean we don't adapt to future trends and advances. This past year, we worked hard on updating our website. We collaborated with a website designer and produced a site with more pictures, more options, a search function, and easier navigability. Spend some time on the site and let us know what you think! You'll find us at:

pentwaterhistoricalsociety.org

## **Calling all Pentwater Aficionados!**



By Beth Russell

**HE PHS NEEDS YOU!** The PHS always appreciates new museum hosts that can greet guests and answer basic questions about the museum and its artifacts. It's a low-stress com-

mitment, and it allows you to enjoy the museum and conversations with its visitors.

This year we are expanding the number of tours that we offer to our residents and visitors. This will help spread the word about the PHS, our museum, and introduce people to our history in a variety of settings that might suit their family and scheduling needs. If you are willing to share Pentwater history, we will provide the materials for you to learn and use as a script for leading these tours. It's always great fun to lead these tours, and sometimes the attendees can tell just as many stories about Pentwater as the docents.

The tours to be offered this summer where additional docents are sought include: *The History Cruise, History on Hancock,* and *A Guide to the Museum.* Each tour would be 45-60 minutes in length. *The History on Hancock* tour involves a walk down our business thoroughfare.

The popular *Architectural Walking Tour* will also be available. If you have qualifications in the area of architecture, you may be a good candidate to lead that tour.

Tour schedules are not finalized. Watch for the final schedule on the website at: pentwaterhistoricalsociety.org Or contact Joan at 231-869-2323 Or jandjgehringer@gmail.com for more information.

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# **First Baptist Church Historical Contributions**

by Amy Vander Zwart with Historical Contributions by Melanie Lillie.

he Pentwater Historical Society and Museum will soon have a facelift. While we are excited for what the future will bring to the Society and Museum, we do not want to forget where we originated. Or rather, where our building originated.

The Pentwater Historical Society and Museum is currently housed at 85 South Rutledge. If you mistake this building for a church, it is because it once was the First Baptist Church.

The First Baptist Church was first organized on April 6, 1882. The following year the first full-time pastor, Reverend E.M. Stephenson, was called. The church purchased a vacant



The First Baptist Church was destroyed by fire.

lot on the corner of Sixth (later to be called First) and Rutledge for \$250. Building began on April of 1884 and when construction was completed, the church building was dedicated on August 10, 1884.

In 1888 the church purchased the first parsonage which was on the lot adjacent to the church building. This lot is now empty.

On November 30, 1893, Thanksgiv-

ing evening, tragedy struck. The church janitor discovered a fire which had started in the tiny basement where the furnace was. By the time the fire had been discovered, it had spread throughout most of the church's framed structure. The entire contents of the church were lost. There was no insurance and after only nine short years, the congregation



church building was \$4,649. The congregation was able to donate \$3,194 and the rest of the project was funded through pledges.

On March 22, 1896 the new, Pentwater Brick, church with a tall steeple and bell tower was dedicated. Reverend Conley from Detroit officiated at the service, along with E.G. Maxwell, the chairman of the church's building committee.

For decades the congregation of First Baptist Church enjoyed a beautiful place of worship. When

they began to outgrow the small church, they started to look for a new location and needed to decide what would be done with their empty church.

Fortunately, at the time, PHS was also looking for a new home. Meetings held, agreements were were made, and on May



The church was rebuilt in 1895



The church transitioned into a museum in 2014.

would have to start from ground zero. A year after the fire, the congregation laid the cornerstone for a larger building with the front door facing East this time instead of South as the original building had been designed. The construction process was underway by early September of 1895. The total cost of construction for the new



In the future, the old First Baptist Church building will once again be transformed but will retain it's lifelong mission of serving the Pentwater community.

31, 2014, the Pentwater Historical Society Museum held its Grand Opening in what was once the First Baptist Church.

The Pentwater Historical Society is proud to be able to preserve and care for this historical building that holds many memories for our community.

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# **The Pentwater Yacht Club**

he rolling waves, the sandy beaches, the scenic small town, these are all things that bring visitors to Pentwater, but that isn't what Pentwater is all about. Pentwater has been and will continue to be about community. Being a community is what founded this area and made it flourish. Being a community is what spurred clubs, activities, foundations, societies, and even the construction of buildings. Being a community is what pushed lead-

In 1935, a century old warehouse, which was affectionately known as "The Dock", became the home of Pentwater Yacht Club. It was a place to socialize, enjoy various water sports, and create a sense of belonging.

ers to form the Pentwater Yacht Club.

Over the years, members have enjoyed a multitude of boating activities, dining, social events, weeknight dinners, bridge



Progress on the new building moves along even in the middle of winter



A crane places steel joists to make a sturdy base for the multi purpose building.

club, and watching a most cherished view, the sunset down the channel to Lake Michigan. Last fall the old building was removed with select pieces saved for prosperity and a new building was begun. You can watch the daily progress on Pentwater Yacht Club Facebook Page. Projected Grand Opening is set for early July. To read a more detailed history of the Pentwater Yacht Club go to the Pentwater Historical Society Museum and ask to see The History of Pentwater Yacht Club 1935-2020.

# THE BIG SALE STARTS ON FRIDAY, JUNE 10 at 9am

Through Saturday, June 11

GATHER UP THAT STUFF! .....and drop it off at the Museum on:

Tues. May 31, Thurs. June 2, Tues. June 7, Thurs. June 9 VOLUNTEERS Needed all day Thursday for set-up. Call Deb 231-869-2230

Need your donated stuff picked up? Call Deb Deward 231-869-2230

# PHS is 40 years old! We're searching for CHARTER MEMBERS!

If you joined PHS in1983 or 1984, we would love to meet you and hear your recollections of the very beginning of the Historical Society!

Do you know someone or have a family member who is a charter Member of the PHS?

Deb Deward would like to hear from you! CALL TODAY! 231-869-2230 What's Up? in the Village. See something in the Village that you believe should be documented? Grab your camera, take a photo and send it with a brief description to the Pentwater Historical Society at: info@pentwaterhistoricalsociety.org





Pentwater Schools Homecoming Celebration. Congraulations Queen Haley Powers and King Jack Stoneman.





Bob shovels snow on a quiet, snowy, early Sunday morning



An early morning winter scene on 4th St. Plenty of people still prefer getting some outdoors activity in the winter by clearing the driveway with a shovel or, in this case, a new fangled "shovel" called a Snow Wolf.



An aerial view of downtown.



A cheerful Holiday "Welcome to Pentwater" display.



A spectacular winter color show on the beach



Red & White



# Wednesday, May 25, 2022 At the VFW Hall

5:30pm **Appetizers** & Social

6:00pm **Greetings from Dick Warner** President, PHS

6:15pm **Dinner** is served

### **7pm** Lee Murdock Presents Music and Stories About Our Great Lakes.

Lee is a talented musician who uses historical research to tell stories and sing folk tales about the Great Lakes. He'll sing the old chanteys from the days of sail, of heroic daring rescues and of modern tragedies. Hear tales about



shipboard life of men and women and the special lore of the beauty and isolation of lighthouses on the Great Lakes.

> Visit with friends, enjoy a fine dinner and experience this entertaining and educational program from Lee Murdock!

ONLY \$20.00 per person (BYOB)

**TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:** Decor by Sandra & Jilly's **Ouestions or information Contact** Deb Deward at: 231-869-2230

# **THE S.S. BADGER** A National Historic Landmark

he S.S. Badger is the last coal-fired passenger steamship in operation in the United States. She has provided a fun, reliable and affordable shortcut across beautiful Lake Michigan for more than 60 years and has transported millions of passengers since her re-birth in 1992. In 2016 she received the nation's highest historic honor when the Department of Interior officially designated the Badger as a National Historic Landmark.



The Badger successfully changed from shipping railroad cars to automobiles.

Additionally, the Badger is extremely unique in that she is an Historic Landmark that moves!

The 410ft. S.S. BADGER can accommodate 600 passengers and 180 vehicles, including RVs, motorcycles, motor



The Badger is towed back to Ludington after maintenance and inspection in Wisconsin.

coaches, and commercial trucks during her sailing season. Originally designed primarily to transport railroad cars, this grand ship and the people who serve her have successfully adapted to the changing world since she first entered service in 1953.

Her unique and bold character takes you back to a period when things were simpler, offering valuable time to slow down, relax, and reconnect with those you love. She is the continuation of a unique and vital maritime tradition, and we celebrate that heritage on board in fun ways that educate and entertain. Her mission has changed from the days of carrying railroad cars 365 days a year, and the Badger's role in the hearts of the areas she serves has not.

In 1875, two years after the city of Ludington was incorporated, the Flint & Pere Marquette Railroad began cross-lake steamer service between Ludington and Sheboygan, Wisconsin to transport goods across Lake Michigan. The first small ships were wooden-hulled and were called breakbulk freighters because cargo was unloaded



#### And there are exciting plans for Museum expansion!

Your skills in fundraising, grant writing or marketing are needed !

Please contact: info@pentwaterhistoricalsociety.com

#### Help Wanted The Pentwater Historical Society Board is in search of more Board Members.

Responsibilities include one meeting a month (with the exception of some winter months) and contributing ideas to help better serve the Pentwater Community through the Historical Society and Museum.

You do not need to be a full-time resident of Pentwater or have any prior knowledge of Pentwater history to become involved!

Contact Norm Shotwell at: shn1607@gmail.com

# BECOME DOCENT

If you have not had the good fortune of being a docent at the museum during the summer months, you may want to think about signing up for 2022. info@pentwaterhistoricalsociety.com You do not need any special skill set or know all there is to know about Pentwater history. You only need to share a smile or two! from rail cars by dockworkers onto the ship and then transferred back onto rail cars at the end of the journey. Milwaukee replaced Sheboygan as the primary Wisconsin port in 1876.

The first Ludington car ferry, the steelhulled Pere Marquette, was added to the Flint & Pere Marquette fleet in 1897. Along with limited passenger accommodations, she boasted four sets of railroad tracks on her deck. allowing loaded rail cars to be shipped across the lake. This eliminated hand loading and unloading of the earlier wooden-hulled freighters and helped coin the term, "car ferry". In 1900, the F & PM merged with other rail lines were the last, and largest, car ferries built in the United States powered by coal-fired steam engines.

As the efficiency of railroad service around Lake Michigan improved, the C&O found it was no longer profitable to transport rail cars by ship. The company was granted permission by the Interstate Commerce Commission to abandon cross-lake routes beginning in 1980. The fleet's three remaining ferries, City of Midland, Spartan, and Badger, were sold to two Ludington businessmen. Their private venture, the Michigan-Wisconsin Transportation Company, continued to focus on rail freight, but the steady

be resurrected with a new mission, Conrad sold the company in 1994 to Bob Manglitz, Jim Anderson and Don Clingan to carry on the tradition of car ferries on Lake Michigan and in 2020 The Interlake Holding Company added the Badger to it's other shipping and ferry businesses.

The Badger's commitment to a fun experience offers traditional favorites including free Badger Bingo, free movies and satellite television, lounge areas, a toddler play area; free limited Wi-Fi, onboard gift shop, an arcade, private staterooms, two separate food service areas, two bars, and sprawling outside decks for lounging or walking. Perhaps



One of the early Pere Marquette Railroad's railcar ferries.

to form what would become the Pere Marquette Railway Company. The new company operated cross-lake car ferry routes successfully for the first half of the century, which led to the construction of ten new vessels.

In 1947, the giant Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad absorbed the Pere Marquette Railway, and the service continued to expand for several more years. During the height of the car ferry era in the 1950s, seven ships sailed in and out of the Ludington harbor year-round, transporting rail freight and passengers across Lake Michigan to the Wisconsin ports of Manitowoc, Milwaukee and Kewaunee.

The sister ships, S.S. Spartan and S.S. Badger, launched in 1952 and 1953, decline in business forced the company to cease operations in November 1990. Railroad car ferries were no longer viable, and the three ships seemed destined for the scrap yard.

In 1992, Charles Conrad, a Ludington native and retired entrepreneur, purchased the City of Midland, Spartan, and Badger and formed Lake Michigan Carferry Service. Conrad knew how important the car ferries were to the local economy, and he wanted to see them sail for another hundred years. He invested his own money to create a new life for the S.S. Badger, transporting leisure travelers, their vehicles, and commercial trucks between Ludington and Manitowoc. Having proven that the Badger could

Later, the ferries hauled automobiles.

a romantic night crossing is more fitting for your style with spectacular sunsets and sparkling constellations for stargazers making the Badger experience extra special.

The Badger experience allows a rare opportunity to explore a little history, and a lot of fun, by taking a step back into the past on a journey that's as important as the destination!

#### Take a trip on an Historic Landmark and the world's last passenger steamship!

The Badger sails daily from mid-May to mid-October between Manitowoc, WI. and Ludington, MI.

Article taken from https://www.ssbadger.com/the-legacy



#### (Oceana Beach Association Continued)

right it up with ropes and they walked on the launch to force it to turn over again. The Coast Guard Station would patrol the north and south beaches for about 3 miles each night. Sometimes the kids would be able to ride along which was always a thrill. The Oceana Beach Association is still in existence today with its Club House and scenically placed cottages. Generations of families have enjoyed the summer lifestyle that OBA has offered over the years and continue to return year after year. The founders of the OBA had a lofty goal for the time and location, but even they would be shocked by the influential people who visited from all across the country for the summer!

#### Sources for the article came from:

A Personal History of Oceana Beach by Margaret McCoy Frank.

In the Beginning About 1888 by Beulah Chesney, 1960

Past and Present by Margaret Frank and Jane Breed

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# **MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY**

### DONATIONS

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Timothy Scovill



By Tim Scovill i like to tell little stories about birds , animals, and times it seems to be a bonus if my little story rhymes i like to tell little stories about hunting with my friends with all the memories i have it seems this story never ends i like to tell little stories about rowing my boat at times i catch some fish and then i tend to gloat i like to tell little stories about times that are long past the way of life once we had and how to make that life last i like to tell little stories about my life , my wife , my love i am blessed with all these things by the grace of God above

### Introducing Our New Columnist

# Mr. Timothy Scovill

<u>**Time with Tim**</u> is a new column that shares memories, stories, and rhymes about Pentwater in old times and new. We want you to get acquainted with Tim right away. Here is a little information about the man behind <u>**Time with Tim**</u>:

I was born in Hart Hospital in 1954 to Louis and Virginia Scovill. I was #2 of 8 children. We lived on the northeast corner of Lowell and Morris in one of two houses on that block. The other house was grandad's house, and the rest of the block was woods. We were lucky enough to know great grandparents on both sides of the family. My mother's parents built and operated Pentwood Cabins. My mother's grandparents owned rental properties on the lake and a duplex rental on the channel. My dad and mom graduated PHS in, '48 and '49. They raised 8 children, all of whom graduated PHS. My grandma graduated PHS in 1928. I graduated in 1973.

While I was a boy scout I went on a 50 mile hike. I learned to scuba dive at 16 and spent many hours "down time" in Pentwater Lake and Lake Michigan. I have hunted and fished for as long as I can remember. We hunted mushrooms, picked wild berries, and learned to grow and preserve our food.

As a senior in high school, I took a welding class at West Shore Community College. When I turned 18, I got a second shift job at Pentwater Wire Products as a production welder. I enlisted in the Navy on a delayed entry program and went to boot camp in San Diego. I deployed to an A-7 squadron and made two med. cruises. I also made a NATO cruise which took me into the Arctic Circle via the north Atlantic. My highest rank was E-4. I met and married Betty Jo after I returned from service. In 1977 our daughter was born prematurely weighing 2.2 pounds. She was the smallest baby I had ever seen. She was about the size of my hand. After 3 months we brought her home. Two years later our son was born. Both children graduated from Hart High School. Tanya was salutatorian. Tanya went on to Michigan state and graduated with honors. Todd enlisted in the army and served in Operation Iraq Freedom. I have 5 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Pentwater is a beautiful place full of memories. I can fish the same spots I fished with my grandad and hunt the same places generations of Scovills have hunted. I love to walk in the woods. I seem to be addicted to the Lake Michigan beach. I like to make things. I mentor boy scouts in blacksmithing and making flint and steel fire starters. I am also a member of Pentwater Artisan Learning Center.

I love where we live and with simple rhymes and stories, I hope to tell you why...

2022 OFFICERS & TRUSTEES OF THE PENTWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY Dick Warner Norm Shotwell Beth Russell Bart Zachrich V-President President Secretary Treasurer TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM MARKETING DIRECTOR Dan Hoekstra DIRECTOR DIRECTOR Jim Lambrix Vacant TRUSTEES: Amy Vander Zwart, Deb Deward and Karen Way NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE Amy Vander Zwart Jim Pikaart

### MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2022 ARE DUE

If you see "20" 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. <u>Please send your check to:</u> Pentwater Historical Society PO Box 54, Pentwater, MI 49449

#### SUMMER DAYS ON PENTWATER LAKE



This early postcard is labeled "A fishing party on Pentwater Lake". The party, which looks like a family, probably hired this powered launch for part of a day.



The boat "OLIVIA" has a happy crew pictured on this postcard labeled "A pleasure party at the Odd Fellows Park, Pentwater, Mich. Notice the proper attire for a summer outing in the 20's of suits, hats and dresses!



Both of these photos are labeled "Sailboat racing, Pentwater Mich".



**GARAGE SALE** 

**JUNE 10** 

HOMECOMING

**PARADE AUG 13** 

**AUG 24** 

**MARK YOUR** 

**CALENDAR!** 

**SPRING DINNER** 

MAY 25

SUMMER DINNER AUG 24	ch".
USE	USE THIS FORM TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NAME.	
ADDR	ADDRESS The address for important mail when it absolutely has to get there!
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