



# PENTWATER PRIDE



*Past Present Promised*

Summer 2024

## A Woman Ahead of Her Time

By Milford M (Tim) Miller

Alberta Leonora Miller was born in Elizabethtown, Illinois in 1880. Bertie, as she was referred to most commonly by family members (but as "Peggy" most often by others and usually as Aunt Peggy by me, although technically she was my Great-Aunt) was one of 16 children. Her father was Jacob Bruce Miller and her mother was Josephine Kemper, a second wife of Jacob's. Little is known of Bertie's early years, save that she remained close to a number of her siblings, especially Grover Cleveland Miller, a brother and my paternal grandfather. I surmise from various sources that Bertie's greatest benefactor and influence was her father's sister, Helen Miller, who was herself a very independent woman, owning and operating a mercantile business for decades (principally millinery) in Richmond, Indiana.

Aunt Peggy attended Depauw University as a music major. By all accounts, she was a child prodigy who achieved early recognition as an exceptional pianist, organist, and composer. As a young woman, she was in demand as a concert pianist, and also as the piano accompanist at orchestra concerts.

On May 25, 1899, Bertie married Samuel Kenley Ruick II, a young Indianapolis attorney, who had recently graduated from Yale and then took an additional year of study at DePauw, where he may have first met Bertie.



Alberta Leonora Miller



Ruick, who was nicknamed "Polly", as he had suffered a broken nose on several occasions playing football at Yale and at DePauw, had the singular distinction of having quarterbacked a Depauw football team to its only victory ever over Indiana University. The nickname was a bit of a misnomer, however, as Uncle Polly (as we called him) was remarkably handsome.

*Continued on page 3*

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The headstone of Irene Enders Meyer has intrigued me since the first time I saw it. To my knowledge, there is no other stone in the cemetery like it!

Located in Block 8, Lot 6, it is an upright stone which has a high pointed top and double rounded shoulders. The front side of the stone reveals beautiful Celtic knotwork. Celtic knots have no beginning and no end. They can represent eternity, resurrection, and life everlasting, the never-ending love of Christ, or interwoven fate. Located in the center of the stone, is the relief carving of a woman. She is wearing her hair in two braids. Her head appears to hang in sadness. Her facial expression seems morose. She clasps what to me resembles a spindle in her right hand. The spindle is often used as a symbol of femininity and can also represent fate. On her left you will notice a (God's) hand coming down from heaven to take up the spindle from her left hand. The words inscribed under her name are "The Lord Giveth" and "The Lord Taketh Away" (A reference to the bible verse from Job 1:21). Her husband's name "Alvin Meyer" and her dates of birth and death are inscribed on the reverse side of the stone.

Irene Enders was born on April 11, 1903, in Chicago, Illinois. She was a talented artist and sculptor according to a tribute written to her in the Ludington Daily News (11 Jun 1934). Her parents were Herman and Hattie (Schroeder) Enders. The Enders were among the first restorers to the Bass Lake area in 1904. Irene's father Herman worked for the Chicago Post Office for 37 years as a letter carrier. Herman and Hattie moved to Bass Lake permanently in 1934.

Irene married architectural sculptor, Alvin William Carl Meyer, on June 1, 1932, at Bass Lake, in Mason County, Michigan. Alvin was the director of architect Holabird & Root's sculpture department in Chicago. He designed sculptural reliefs for the Chicago Board of Trade Building, the Chicago Daily News Plaza and many other buildings designed by the firm.

## Secrets in Stone

by Shannon Larson

Irene and Alvin had one daughter, Clara "Louisa", who was born in Flemington, New Jersey on July 4, 1933.

Irene died from spinal meningitis on May 29, 1934, while visiting her parents at their Bass Lake home (The Ludington Daily News, 31 May 1934). She was 31 years old.

Louisa lived with her maternal grandparents in Pentwater after her mother's death. She died at Oakview Medical Center in Ludington on November 27, 2020.

Is it possible that Alvin Meyer created Irene's beautiful headstone? I would like to think so, but we may never know!



From the early 1900s and continuing to the commencement of WW II, Indianapolis was an epicenter of music and the arts, generally. Bertie was a woman in advance of her time. She assembled the best of the female musicians in the area and formed an orchestra that was in continual demand to play the ballrooms of hotels in the Indianapolis area, which were weekly sites for elegant gatherings. Bertie also became recognized as someone who could produce concerts of outstanding musical talent and she used those abilities to present fine music in various Indianapolis venues.

I don't know how Aunt Peggy became acquainted with Pentwater. Family lore suggests that an uncle took several nieces and nephews on an excursion of several Great Lakes ports and Pentwater simply never thereafter was far from Bertie's thoughts. Aunt Peggy's musical entrepreneurship were not simply labors of love: they were also lucrative. Thus, in another way, Bertie was ahead of the times. She invested her money in real estate. Her first purchase in Pentwater was the cottage now known as Graynook. I have not done a search of real estate records, though I believe that when Aunt Peggy purchased it, the cottage was called Got'em Again and was essentially a fisherman's shack.

Thereafter, over a period of several years, Peggy purchased three more cottages west of the Coast Guard Station and between it and the beach land that the Mears had dedicated to public use. I don't know the order of their purchase, but the next cottages purchased were named Tuckaway, Paddle In, and Beachnuts (also called Breezewood). Aunt Peggy lived in Beechnuts in the summer and rented the other cottages. At some point in the 1930's, Peggy caused a fifth cottage to be built. It was located just west of Breezewood, and she dubbed it Driftwood. The family lore tells of Driftwood being built by a crew from Purdue University. The story carried some credence for me, as Aunt Peggy's niece (Grover Miller's daughter, Alice) was married to a professor at Purdue at the time Driftwood was built. Subsequently, it was determined that Driftwood was situated on public land and an agreement was reached with the State of Michigan to allow Driftwood to remain where it was until Peggy died or no longer owned the adjacent land upon which Beachnuts sits. Don Lambrix ultimately bought Driftwood to use as a rental property and had it moved to a location on Lowell Street adjacent to the north property

line of the former Coast Guard Station property. Moving Driftwood even a short distance was no small feat, as Driftwood features a stone fireplace that extends upwards two stories. A sixth cottage, Ship Ahoy is also located west of the old Coast Guard property. From my first remembrance of that cottage as a child, it was owned by Richard Herline, referenced below.

Eventually, as we know, all Peggy's cottages were sold. The first, perhaps, was Ship Ahoy. My earliest visit to Pentwater was in 1937, at age 6 months. And during every year thereafter, I have spent time in Pentwater. One of the most consistent of all the wonderful memories of a youth in Pentwater is that of Capt. Dick Herline. I have no idea of how old Herline was when I was a pre-teen staying for summers with Aunt Peggy, but he was bigger than life to me always. He wasn't truly a Captain, but he had spent 30 years in the Coast Guard, retiring with the rank of Boatswain, a very responsible position, especially shipboard. Capt. Dick was an important part of the Miller family until his death.

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Herline, with decades of experience in matters of maintenance, did most of everything necessary to maintain Aunt Peggy's houses. For Herline, as a retired Coast Guard member who had served on all the Great Lakes (including at the Pentwater Station) and elsewhere, living next to the Pentwater station was a great retirement plan; and for Peggy, having a first-class maintenance presence 24/7 and all year round was perfect. I can't leave the subject of Herline without a last comment. Herline was a remarkably brave man. I grew up hearing about multiple instances of his bravery. For one such instance, through the efforts of my father and others, Capt. Dick, following a resolution by the US Congress, was awarded the Silver Life Saving Medal in 1940 for saving a youth in 1914, who was drowning in the channel at Pentwater. Capt. Dick referred to the award as his Congressional Medal. Herline was a model any kid would be fortunate to have as a part of his life.

Polly Ruick died November 26, 1950. Following Uncle Polly's death, Peggy decided to sell the Indianapolis home and live in Pentwater year-round. I suspect it was not easy for her to give up the Indianapolis home, as it was remarkable if only for the fact that the living room was two-story and a full-size pipe organ occupied almost the entirety of one wall--all two stories of it. A remarkable thing to see, it least for a young boy. In addition to a love of music, Peggy loved Samoyed dogs and she was seldom seen at home, either Indianapolis or Pentwater, without one or more of the dogs being present. Aunt Peggy would keep the dog's hair after combing and when there was a sufficient amount, had the dog hair woven into scarves and sweaters for family and friends.

Her dogs were champions-literally. One Prince Ski...(something or other) was a class winner at the New York Kennel Club big show. Prince Ski sat for an oil portrait by one of Pentwater's most famous artists (according to Ask Art.com), Frederick Herman (Fritz) Immer. The Immer's lived at 440 Lowell St and in my mind's eye, I see him painting plein air near the entrance to Mears State Park....but, maybe not, as I was just 2 1/2 when he died. The Samoyed dogs were a part of Pentwater lore, if lore be judged by the fact that the dogs appeared on postcards that could be purchased at Ken Lite's pharmacy. Peggy had a large dog pen between the back of her house and Lowell St, with a raised platform in the center upon which the dogs, which were quite large and truly exceptional looking, would sit and watch the passersby pass.



Captain Herline

Aunt Peggy died on April 25, 1974 at age 94. As she aged, Aunt Peggy's financial resources did not keep pace and she sold Tuckaway to George and Yvonne Tubich and Paddle Inn to Ray and Lela Taylor. Both the Tubichs and the Taylors had been long time renters of the cottages they ultimately purchased, and the respective families had been part of the Pentwater landscape for much of my youth and later. Larry Taylor, a son, and I were childhood Pentwater friends. While at Michigan State, Larry built a ski jump, which was somehow transported to Pentwater Lake. We used it all summer: the only time I have ever seen such on Pentwater Lake. In time, Aunt Peggy needed to sell the remaining properties, Graynook and Beachnuts, and by so doing she supported herself to the end of her very amazing life journey. I have many fond memories of both Beachnuts and Graynook; but, all such memories pale against the memories of the woman who made my memories possible in the first instance.

A vertical poster for a Summer Dinner event. At the top, a green banner with white text says "SAVE the DATE". Below it, the words "SUMMER DINNER" are written in large, light blue, sans-serif capital letters. The background of the poster is a sunset scene with silhouettes of trees and reeds. In the center, an orange box contains the date "August 21, 2024" in bold black font, followed by "Wednesday" in a cursive script. Below that, the schedule is listed: "5:30 - Social Hour", "6:00 - Catered Dinner is Served BYOB", and "7:00 - Special Presentation". At the bottom, a dark blue box contains the text "Tickets: \$30 per person". Below that, in a black box, it says "Tickets Available August 1st From: www.PentwaterHistoricalSociety.org and in town". At the very bottom, in a black box, it says "Location: AgBio research center, 5185 N. Oceana Drive, Hart, MI".

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*Wednesday*

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[www.PentwaterHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.PentwaterHistoricalSociety.org) and in town

Location: AgBio research center, 5185 N. Oceana Drive, Hart, MI



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**Spring  
Dinner!**



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## Museum Updates

by Daniel Hoekstra Sr

We have been busy behind the scenes making changes in the museum. There have been quite a few exhibits taken down and others put up. Brand new this year you will see the Sequoia model that has been painstakingly put back together. Those who have worked on the model have taken steps to make sure of the authenticity down to the colors of the curtains and even the exact location of table and chairs. Gary Yakubowski, who finished the model, actually knew a Secret Service Agent that served aboard the Sequoia protecting the Presidents. Our exhibit of the Sequoia will be ready on June 25th for all to enjoy.

We said goodbye to the Pentwater Fire Department exhibit on loan for the past two years. The huge hose reel was taken apart and moved to storage. Most of the Charles Mears State Park exhibit has also been stored. This was all necessary to keep the museum interesting and ever changing so our guests will see different exhibits each year.

Guarding the exterior of our museum is a sculpture created by Tyler and Ashley Voorhees ([www.tylervoorheesart.com](http://www.tylervoorheesart.com)) arranged by the Pentwater Arts Council. It is about 12' tall and looks like Abraham Lincoln all made out of metal and lights up at night. Be sure to stop by during the daylight hours as well as at night.

If you would like to become a volunteer at the museum, please let us know. We are always in need for docents to welcome guests. No, you don't have to know about Pentwater history. It's super easy and a lot of fun getting to know patrons that are interested in our history. We are an artifact museum with loads of artifacts from our past in the Pentwater area.



**The Lamplighter**

**Bring the Kids!**

**We now have  
an activity table  
and legos!**





**The Noon Siren  
is Back!**



## *Third Graders Visit!*



**A group of students in front of  
Pentwater School in the early  
1900's**





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## Welcome New Members!



Keith Danielson  
Tracy Kolinger  
Gail Sobecki  
Sue Madden



Larry & Cheryl Marentette  
Gene & Judy Jankowski  
William & Susan Bainton



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THANK YOU  
TO ALL WHO CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR GOAL  
OF PRESERVING PENTWATER'S HISTORY  
AND MAKING IT ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

## Grants

Oceana Community Foundation –  
Sequoia Project

Great Lakes Energy People Fund –  
Sequoia Project

Historical Society of Michigan –  
Digitization Project

MACC / MEDC – Operations Support



THE PRESIDENTIAL YACHT SEQUOIA, HAS DOCKED...

We invite you to see her, our newest museum exhibit. Hear the stories of glitz, sequins and cigars...of history making President's... Hoover, Roosevelt, Kennedy and Nixon who boarded her to get away, to make major decisions for our nations future, during times of war and peace. Yes, you will learn of a time when the men and women of immense power gathered on her decks to guide our nation through those important moments which changed history. We are extremely proud that the PHS Museum is the owner of this artifact, the only exact model of the Sequoia Presidential Yacht in existence, and we are proud to share the story it played in our nations history with our visitors. An exhibit which we believe you too, will find outstanding.



The Sequoia will be on permanent display at the PHS Museum beginning June 25, 2024.



## Time With Tim

On Sunday, June 12, 1966, I embarked on an adventure I will never forget. I was 11 years old and the youngest to make the 50-mile trek.

Pentwater Boy Scouts with gear and packs boarded a school bus Sunday afternoon for a trip to a point near Fremont where the fifty-mile hike began. The trail followed an Indian Trail back to Pentwater. Our Scout leader Bob Lucas wore brand new boots and got blisters so bad he could only hike the first day.

I remember the dehydrated food was bland, so we foraged a little to add flavor. I recall wild asparagus, cat tail roots, water cress, and one day we had frog legs. I learned to never check your compass by an electric fence. We only hiked about a mile in the wrong direction. We corrected the mistake and still made camp as planned.

We went swimming at a lake with waist deep muck. We had to help each other out and wash the mud off in a small stream. The only injuries from the long hike were blisters and a bad sunburn that one of the scouts, Pat, had. I recall good spirits and fun, teamwork, campfires, homemade tents, starlight, and fresh air. Bob even told us a little history about the trail we were on.

*The Ludington Daily News Article on Wednesday, June 15th, 1966, read as follows:*

**PENTWATER** - A trail trod by moccasins feet of American Indians over 100 years ago is being retraced this week by 21 boys of Pentwater Troop no. 145 Timber Trails Council, Boy Scouts of America, and their leader, Scoutmaster Robert Lucas.

The scouts carrying 24# packs of equipment and food sufficient to last them for a 50-mile hike which they plan to cover in 5 days. Departed via school bus early Sunday afternoon for a point south of Fremont to start on their hike back to Pentwater. There they will pick up the trail presumed to be part of the Pentwater Saginaw and upriver trail travel by the Ottawa's and other Michigan Indians over a century ago when they were pushed Northward into the then wild lands of the state by white settlers taking over their homes near Ionia and Grand Rapid in the Grand, Flat, and Thornapple River Valleys.

Research through Michigan Historical Society and other Historic Source outlines the trail as following riverbeds north from Ionia to near Fremont Lake then swinging Northwest through Newaygo and Oceana Counties to the site of Pentwater on the Lake Michigan shore. The place for beginning the hike was selected because it is approximately 50 miles from Pentwater. Scouts completing the trip will have earned two awards. One for the 50-mile hike and the second a historical trail award. As they journey across country without regard for the white mans paved roads the boys plan to camp each night at the site of a former Indian village and see some Indian mounds which remain yet unmolested by the white man.

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***The Historical Society would like to hold recorded video interviews of long-time residents to preserve history. If you have been a long-time resident of Pentwater and would like to be interviewed, we would love to talk to you.***

***We are also identifying individuals who would like to help conduct these historical interviews.***

***If you would like to be interviewed or would like to help with this project, please contact  
Bart Zachrich at 810 577 6591 or email [bzach1949@yahoo.com](mailto:bzach1949@yahoo.com)***

They plan to camp Sunday night approximately 6 miles from their starting point. At a site in the Northwest corner of Sheridan Township Newaygo County. On Monday night the campsite was to be on the shore of MacLaren Lake in Newfield Township, Oceana County, and on Tuesday in Elbridge Township at the site of the Memorial erected to Cobmoosa, he is a noted Indian Chief who led his band of Ottawa's from the Flat River Valley to land set aside by the government as an Indian Reservation in Oceana County in 1955. The fourth night out should find them on the North branch of the Pentwater River in Weare Township and the fifth night, back home.

The Pentwater scouts will sleep out along the way and prepare their own food each meal but with numerous improvements upon the way of the Indians who's trail they are following. They carry modern sleeping bags with large plastic sheets to be made into tents in case of rain and their food is all of dehydrated variety. Each meal for 6 boys packed into a neat little box easily tucked away into packs carried on their backs. They are dependent upon the country through which they are traveling only for water and plan to fill canteens only at tested wells in farmyards through which they will pass.

Boys on the hike are Eagle Scout Frank Cutler, First Class Scout Leonard Hilton, Brian VanNortwick; Second Class Scouts Bill Shafer, Ralph Hilton, Calvin VanNortwick, Nike Graham, Jeff Beeman, Dennis Veine, John Cutler, Jim Shafer, Mike Stenberg, Tim Scovill, Wayne Schlee, David Duncan, Jim Stewart, Pat Murphy, Dan Lovell, Bradley Greiner, and Mark Daly. Scout Master Lucas plans to make the entire 50 mile with the troop, and he will be assisted by other adults who will meet the hikers at various points each morning and make a day's journey with them.

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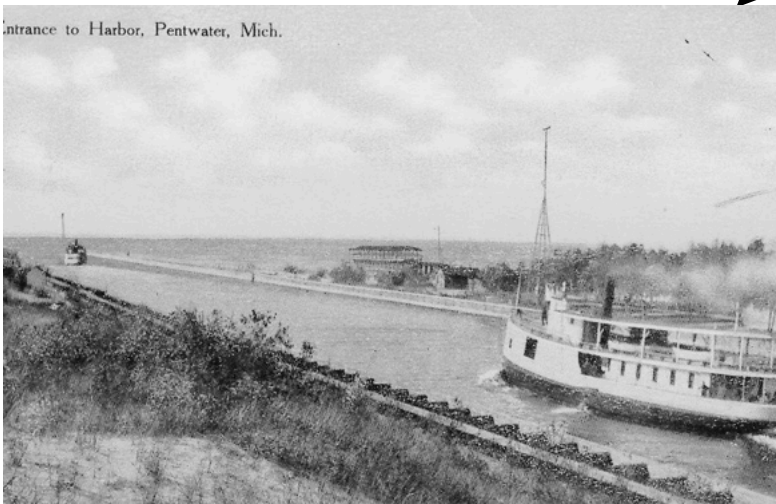
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*Cottage Tours*

**June 23, 2024**

*Homecoming Parade*

**August 10, 2024**

*Summer Dinner*

**August 21, 2024**