

Peden Family Papers

COLLECTION, MS B156

DATE

1924 – 2008

CONTRIBUTOR

Fairfield Museum

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY ELEMENT

Charles Samuel "Chick" Peden was born in Brooklyn in 1903, he attended Yale University and graduated from Sheffield Scientific School in 1924. He worked for R.C.A. as a research engineer, developing sound and film. He went on to be a pioneer newsreel man for R.C.A. - Fox Movietone News and Hearst Metrotone News until his death in 1974. He and his family lived in the Benson Tavern on South Benson and Old Post Road. Gertrude Peden nee Johnson was born in 1904 in Cornwall Bridge, CT and came to Fairfield after her mother's death in 1913. She lived here with her cousin, Finette Nichols during the 1918 flu epidemic and moved to Freeport, L.I. until her marriage in September 1928 to Charles Peden. Gertrude inherited the Benson House from Finette Nichols in 1948 and remained there until her death on January 21, 1988. Laura Peden died in 1934 and was Charles Peden's paternal grandmother and Marcia Miner's paternal great-grandmother. Marcia Peden was born in 1929 in London when her father was stationed there on assignment. She grew up in Fairfield and graduated from the University of Bridgeport. She married T. Richardson Miner Jr. on April 1, 1961 in Honolulu, HI and they divorced in Germany in 1968. She was an English teacher in CT, Hawaii, Germany, and California. She also worked in publishing as an Assistant Editor for Fawcett Publications from 1955-1959. She also was a self-employed book restorer and free-lance graphic artist. She wrote regular articles for the Fairfield Citizen News on the history of the town as assigned, including covering the Open VISION Lecture series at Fairfield University.

SCOPE & CONTENT

Articles, documents, letters, photographs related to the Peden family. Typescripts of series on historic houses of Fairfield, opinion pieces and Memorial Day speech about political dissent in the Charles Peden series. Pitcairn Island material related to Gertrude Peden's pen pal contains letters and also newsletters about life on Pitcairn during the 1960s-1970s.

ARRANGEMENT

Arranged into separate series on the Peden family: Charles, Gertrude, Marcia.

Collection Contents

Peden Family Papers

Gertrude Peden

Photographs

Miscellaneous collection of 59 family photographs, mostly of Gertrude and Charles Peden.

Gertrude Peden --Miscellaneous

Contains blank checks; miscellaneous correspondence written to and by Gertrude; two memorial articles written by Leo Ward and Marcia Miner.

Pitcairn Miscellany (Newsletter)

Contain various newsletters printed between December 1963 - April 1971. The newsletter was printed monthly and gives an insight to the daily life on Pitcairn Island. It was prepared by the children at the Pitcairn Island School.

Gertrude Peden -Pitcairn Island Correspondence

Letters written between Gertrude Peden and Virginia Christian, a penpal of Gertrude's who lived on Pitcairn Island. The correspondence dates between 1924-1971. Also contains correspondence between Virginia's son and Marcia Miner (Gertrude's daughter) dated 1993.

Finette B. Nichols letters to Gertrude Peden

Letters written to Gertrude Peden from her cousin, Finette Nichols.

Marcia Miner nee Peden

Marcia Minor was daughter of Charles and Gertrude Peden

**Benson House Legacy manuscript**

Memoir by Marcia Miner titled "On Coming Here" about the history of the Benson House. Draft III, dated May 17, 1993.

Thank you notes for articles and Senior Center Class

Various handwritten notes and thank you's to Marcia.

Photographs -- Marcia Miner

Contains 30 photographs mostly of Marcia Miner, some of her wedding, and a few with her parents.

Miscellaneous material

Contains photostat of Report of Birth; report card from 1941, various newspaper articles on Marcia being named Fairfield Town Historian in 2004; Examples of stationary designed by Marcia;

Education career materials

Documents relating to Marcia Miner's long teaching career.

Miscellaneous correspondence

Miscellaneous letters written to and by Marcia Miner between 1940-1988.

Marcia Miner correspondence to parents

Various letters written from Marcia Miner to Gertrude and Charles Peden.

Acting material

Miscellaneous programs and newspaper articles on various theatrical shows, 1950-1953.

Charles Peden**Laura Peden**

Miscellaneous documents of Laura Peden, Charles Peden's paternal grandmother who died in 1934.

Charles Peden - WW II

Miscellaneous documents having to do with WW II service of Charles Peden

Charles Peden - Old Post Road Association

Charles Peden was a director of the Old Post Road Association. He was concerned about zoning in the historic district. The file contains miscellaneous correspondence, letters to editor.

Charles Peden - Miscellaneous**"A Happy House" draft manuscript - Charles Peden**

22 chapter draft typescript by Charles Peden, relating to living in the Benson House.

Charles Peden- Film related

Contains newspaper articles, correspondence, scripts, all relating to Charles Peden's newsreel and film career.

Charles Peden Correspondence

Letters written to and from Charles Peden.

Charles Peden - Articles

Miscellaneous letters to the editor written by Charles Peden to various local newspapers; 1 published story from *American Legion Magazine*, November 1947 titled "A guy named Kelly."

Genealogy Documents

Contains documents on Charles Peden and Gertrude Peden; Marriage certificate for Charles Peden's grandparents: George C Bunce and Jessie M. Seaman; Envelope with locks of hair from Mary Unery, Gertrude Peden's great-grandmother, and Catherine



Edwards; Invoice for cutting inscription on William B. Johnson's (1861-1943) gravestone, Gertrude Peden's father.