

Peddie

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CHRONICLE
SPECIAL ISSUE



THE POWER OF MANY

One Peddie campaign goes beyond goal to raise \$106.3 million



LOST IN LORE

*Unraveling Peddie's most
spellbinding mysteries*

**PEDDIE IS A CLOSE-KNIT
COMMUNITY, AND AS SUCH, IT HAS
A RICH HISTORY OF STORYTELLING.**

Some stories undoubtedly hold grains of truth. But like a game of Telephone, an original account can be distorted through the years (or decades) by embellishing or omitting key points — subtly or not, consciously or not. From Peddie comes an anecdote about a revered woman's final wishes; there's another about the whereabouts of a ransomed heirloom.

Or, for yet another example, a story about a bovine being led up school steps.

Truth or tall tale? If it's a great story, it doesn't really matter. We enlisted the help of alumni and employees to present you with some of the most entertaining legends that live on.



THE ONE ABOUT THE CAR ON THE ROOF OF MEMORIAL HALL

Legend: The fabled incident of a car being carried onto the roof of Memorial Hall remains shrouded in uncertainty. While the specifics remain vague, Peddie alumni steadfastly assert its occurrence. Was the car a Volkswagen Beetle or a British sports car? Did it happen in the early 1960s or the mid-1970s? Did it happen more than once? And who can lay claim to the car's ownership? The following Facebook conversation offers a glimpse into the ongoing debate.

Sharon Evans '63: "The Class of '63 took apart the VW bug of then-Headmaster Morang and carried it up to the roof of Memorial Hall (now Annenberg Hall) as their senior prank. It was reassembled on the roof and was able to start and run. The school had to get a crane to bring it down and never, to my knowledge, figured out who did it. Ah, we know now, don't we?"

Fred Bull '77: "The prank with the car being carried into Memorial Hall was told to me by my stepfather [Dietrich von Schwerdtner], who was a reliable source of information."

Mary Stella '75: "It was in the school year 1974-75. The car was small, a gray MG, owned by English teacher Dennis Hartzell."

Frank Buntschuh '75: "I seem to recall the car as being Mr. Darst's bug-eyed Sprite, but into Wilson and not Memorial. Could be totally wrong, as well."

Mary Stella '75: "Come to think of it, I believe there was more than one car re-parked that year. I'm absolutely positive about Mr. Hartzell's MG."

Wes Lawson '76: "I thought the Austin-Healey belonged to Hartzell?"

Mary Stella '75: "I remember it being a gray MG owned by Mr. Hartzell that was carried up the steps. People tried to warn him that it was an obvious target."



THE ONE ABOUT THE THOMAS B. PEDDIE BUST

Legend: As the tale goes, a distinguished artifact on the Peddie campus, the bust of Thomas B. Peddie, once graced a prominent location on campus before finding sanctuary in the attic archives of the Coates-Coleman Alumni House. Preserved within a protective glass case, this revered sculpture holds a mysterious history. According to Wes Lawson '76, a daring group of students embarked on an audacious quest, kidnapping the bust and demanding a ransom. The unanswered questions loom large: Was the ransom ever paid, or did the captors face consequences for their actions? In our quest for the truth, we invite anyone with knowledge of this extraordinary event to come forward and help us unravel this enigma.



THE ONE ABOUT THE CHICKEN NUGGETS

Legend: A peculiar belief circulates among Peddie students, its origin remaining elusive, suggesting a connection between chicken nugget day in the dining hall and the suspension or expulsion of a fellow student. Says Madeleine Lallier '24: "Several instances of chicken nugget day in my three years at Peddie have appeared to coincide with another student's severe repercussions. Any time the heavenly smell of chicken nuggets begins to waft from the student center and around campus, one can expect to hear their classmates asking or speculating who got kicked out. Whether or not the correlation exists on purpose, it sends a clear message to the surviving student body: 'Follow the rules and be a good human, or else everyone will get chicken nuggets except for you!'"

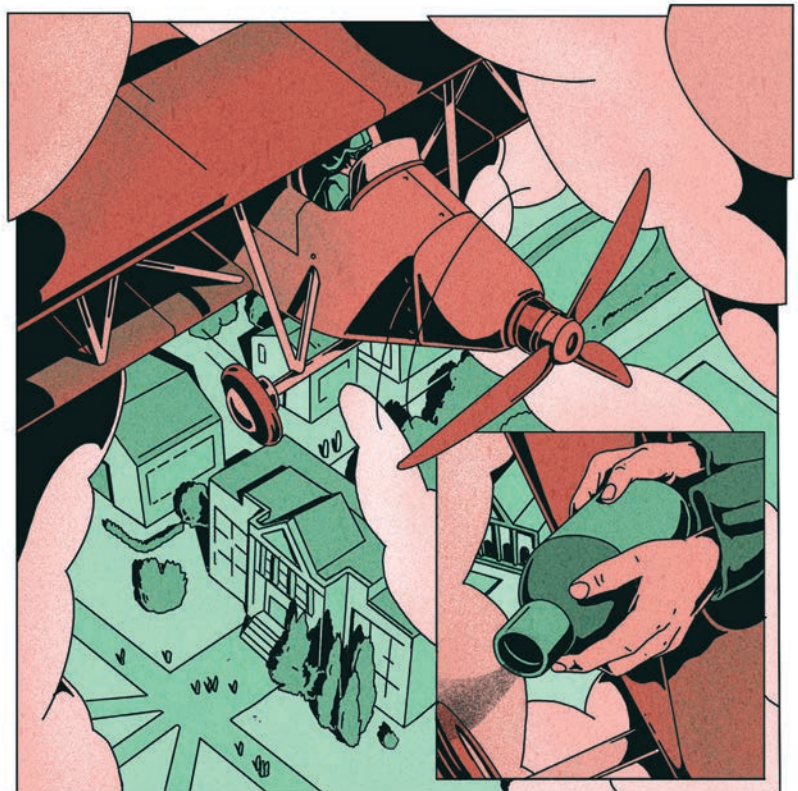


THE ONE ABOUT STRIKING A POSE

Legend: Amidst the tapestry of Peddie campus legends, a peculiar tradition exists that eludes explanation yet embodies the spirit of togetherness. When graduating seniors pass the torch to underclassmen, they bestow upon them a seemingly arbitrary gift – a photo capturing Olympic figure skater Michael Weiss in a whimsical mid-routine pose. Anna Piwowar '14 shared her experience: "[The photo] had been passed down through several generations of graduating seniors before being entrusted to me, and it came with a set of rules. The most important ones were that it had to be prominently displayed and that whenever your roommate said 'Michael Weiss,' you had to strike the pose."

THE ONE ABOUT ELSIE'S ASHES

Legend: Unearthed by Director of Strategic Marketing and Communications Wendi Patella P'17 '20 during her work on the publication "150 Faces of Peddie" for the school's sesquicentennial celebration, this tale sheds light on an extraordinary tribute. Elsie Peddie Sauvage, Class of 1885, daughter of Thomas Peddie, renovated Kalomathia House in honor of all the women who attended the New Jersey Classical and Scientific Institute before the turn of the last century. She so loved this school that she requested in her will that her ashes be dropped over its campus. Upon Elsie's death in 1936, her son wrote a letter to the school, requesting permission to fly a plane over campus to fulfill his mother's wishes — as she put it, "without previous announcement of date or spectacular sensationalism, which would cause revulsion to anyone's feelings."



THE ONE ABOUT THE MURDER MYSTERY

Legend: Octagon House, one of New Jersey's few remaining eight-sided houses and Peddie's second-oldest building, harbors more than just historical significance. In a tale that dates back over a century, before Peddie owned it, the house became the setting for a perplexing murder mystery that continues to intrigue.

The tale involves Carrie Hutchinson, a woman who found herself hounded by a persistent Italian admirer. Despite her efforts to ward him off by installing brown blinds throughout the house, the circumstances surrounding Carrie's demise in the home's music room remain unresolved. The mystery deepens with the unsolved disappearance of her valuable jewels, and the presence of a window, concealed from outside view, adds an air of secrecy.

Brian Davidson, director of alumni relations and resident of Octagon House, has noticed peculiar occurrences that hint at a possible supernatural presence in the home. "There are little things here and there that make you think there are other spirits in the house. I'm someone who always shuts a door, and I've found doors open. The power gets tripped a lot. It's an old house with an old circuit breaker. It feels a little spooky."



THE ONE ABOUT THE COW IN WILSON HALL

Legend: Here's an udderly good yarn that stretches the boundaries of belief — a daring group of students venturing to the roof of Wilson Hall, leading an unsuspecting cow along. Skepticism may arise initially, as bringing such a large creature like a horse or cow to the top of a building often finds itself among school prank lore. However, during a lively Facebook conversation, doubts were dispelled.

"The cow trick was no urban legend," asserted George Bradley Scheller '74. Echoing this sentiment, Bob Hartmann '71 exclaimed, "I believe it came from the Zaitz Dairy Farm (East Windsor) all by itself." But it was John Abraham '65 who finally set the story straight, if his account is to be believed: "During the night, we raided the farm behind Wilson Hall. On that farm were cows. Those creatures will climb up steps but not climb down steps. Several of us led a cow to the roof of Wilson Hall, where it had to be airlifted off by helicopter the next day."



THE ONE ABOUT THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

Legend: Does Peddie harbor supernatural encounters? Over the years, eerie incidents in various campus buildings have fascinated and spooked students and staff. Here are a few chilling tales.

KALOMATHIA HOUSE

Betty Tennyson P'93 '94 '98, former math teacher and former Kalomathia resident: "My youngest daughter, Erin, while a Peddie student, was sleeping in the back room above the-now dining room. At night, there was a little boy who would wake her up and say, 'Do you want to play with me?' I had a friend who was, at that time, a chaplain at Peddie. He came as a favor to me and did — I don't know if you would call it an exorcism, but a blessing of the house to get rid of any unfriendly, evil spirits."



PEDDIE ARTS CENTER

Craig Dale, visual arts teacher: "In and around the corner where the breezeway meets the south wing of Swig, several pieces have been destroyed in the overnight hours. Since the Ward family crypt is not far from there, I suspect that it's one of them who fancies themselves an art critic and expresses their opinion in no uncertain terms."



GEIGER-REEVES

Lizzie Lamb '23: "The Peddie theater is haunted by a ghost who likes to move things around and let in birds occasionally. I swear I've seen her haunting the lighting grid. She seems cool, but definitely a ghost ... So realistically, how cool can that be?"

Eva Middleton '25: "Anyone who has been on Peddie set crew before can tell you a lot of fun stories, but one that sticks out to me the most is Paul, a plastic Hamlet-esque skull attached to a fake plastic totem pole disguised to look like wood, with straw that adorns the top of the pole and additionally, on his head. Sometime last spring, Paul was rescued from the pits of the prop room and brought back up to the light as a new set crew mascot. Each day, Paul could be found with a different motif. Some of them include being adorned with a mask and sunglasses and residing on Harry Holcombe's chair with a blanket wrapped around him like a baby. His straw hair could often be seen tied up with a rubber band. Once, he was even taped to the front ticket desk to welcome kids as they wandered into the lobby for set crew that day. However, Paul has gone missing. Though thorough hunting of the prop room has been done, no one knows how Paul disappeared."

Marisa Procopio '87, resident prop designer: "Peddie's prop stock has been in my purview since 2015, and my hands have been on every item in it. I can say without a doubt that we've never owned a skull on a pole, so yeah, this story just got creepier."

