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Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Miller, Betty West

Betty West Miller Collection, 1920s-[ongoing]

PCA 451

164 images

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ACQUISITION: The collection was donated by Betty West Miller in 2004. Acc. no. 2004-57, Acc no. 2004-60.

ACCESS: The collection is available for viewing.

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PROCESSING: This collection will be ongoing as materials are added by Betty West Miller. Each accession will be treated as a series if possible. *Series I:* Photographs in album were numbered. Loose photographs will be numbered and housed with the album. Some photos are very faded but can probably be digitally restored upon request. *Series II:* Negatives were numbered and scanned. Descriptions were copied from negative sleeves.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Betty West Miller, lifelong resident of Juneau, Alaska, is a genealogist, indexer, and local historian. She was born at St. Ann's Hospital, Dec. 11, 1936, married Norm Miller Nov. 2, 1956. The Millers have two sons, Norm, Jr. and Daryl.

[For more detailed information, see West-Miller Timeline below]

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

[Please see Scope and Contents Notes for each series.]

SERIES I: Charles Carlton "Carl" Collen photograph album

Biographical Timeline:

CHARLES CARLTON "CARL" COLLEN TIMELINE

by
Betty West Miller

3/19/1887: Born Grayling, MI (one record shows born 3/19/1886 born in Detroit, MI). The Collen siblings and family had Collen Resort on Portage Lake, Grayling, MI with campground and large Pavillion for many years.

1912 Son James was born to Carl and then wife Minnie.

3/6/1919 C. C. Collen and small son (James) returned to Ketchikan from the East. Mrs. Minnie E. Collen and youngest son (William) are expected to arrive soon.

5/9/1927 Capt. Carl Collen of the USFS *Ranger VII* back in Juneau from Sitka fieldtrip.

10/20/1927 Capt. Carl Collen of USFS *Ranger VII* left for Port Snettisham to bring Forest Service crew back to Juneau where they have been rebuilding a suspension bridge on the fast trail over Long River.

11/29/1927 Capt. Carl Collen takes USFS *Ranger VII* to Ketchikan for overhaul and repair and will remain in Ketchikan while work is being done and bring it back to Juneau when completed.

4/8/1928 married Adelaide Frances Moran West in Juneau.

7/7/1928 Capt. Carl Collen left USFS in Juneau for Ketchikan last night where he will be in charge of the USFS craft *Weepose*.

7/23/1928 Capt. Collen brings USFS *Weepose* to Juneau to work in the vicinity of Juneau the remainder of this summer.

1929 Carl's son, James Collen, was killed in Aberdeen, WA at the age of 17 years when he drove off a bridge. James is buried at Fern Hill.

5/6/1929 married Adelaide again in Ketchikan. (why ??)

10/16/1929 Capt. Collen on the USFS launch *Weepoose* dropped employees Jack Thayer and Fred Herring early in the morning off at Eliza Harbor to cruise the timber in a creek valley on westerly shore of Eliza Harbor, southeast part of Admiralty Island. A brown bear attacked Thayer who was in the lead and Herring got up a tree to safety. Thayer was mauled pretty bad and Herring ran back to the beach to get help. Herring and Capt. Collen got back up to Thayer in the dark and dressed his wounds, made a fire to get him warm, made a stretcher and wrapped him in blankets. He kept thanking them for taking care of him, but eventually passed away late that evening. In memory of Jack, Thayer Lake was named for him.

11/1/1929 Capt. Collen on the USFS *Weepoose*, used in pulp tender surveys in Juneau district since early last spring, left today for USES shipyards in Ketchikan. It had a tow, the *Heuer*, a 36-foot boat purchased by USFS District Office to be used in the Ketchikan District as a tender for trail construction work.

4/6/1933 Carl received his Mariners License in Juneau.

2/13/1934 Capt. Collen on *Auklet* for Bureau of Fisheries stream improvement in Wrangell district and then on to Sitka on seal patrol.

3/10/1934 Capt. Collen on *Auklet* for Bureau of Fisheries stream improvement Pavlof Harbor, Chichagof Island.

Late 1930s

[thru] 1950s Carl had a painting business with his partner, Max Mielke, painting interiors (and wall papering), and exteriors. He also bought his own power fishing boat and fished commercially during the summer months in and around the Juneau and SE areas. Carl and Adelaide lived in a little bungalow home on Glacier Avenue right next door to the Spruce Delicatessen that Mr. Al Glover owned and ran. [Current location of Alaska Laundry and Dry Cleaners]

1963 Carl and Adelaide moved to McMinnville, OR to reside in retirement as they couldn't afford to remain in Juneau with the high taxes on their home and the cost of living.

7/3/1976 Adelaide Collen passed away in McMinnville, OR and is buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Seattle, WA in her Moran family plot.

10/26/1979 Carl Collen passed away in McMinnville, OR and is buried with Adelaide in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Seattle, WA in the Moran family plot.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

This album belonged to Charles Carlton "Carl" Collen who was a cook/deckhand on board the Juneau boat *Yakobi*, ca. 1933. The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey chartered the *Yakobi* to map and chart areas in the Bering Sea. They went as far as Icy Point, to the Diomed Islands, King Island, St. Lawrence Island, and the Aleutian Islands. At Sand Point the *Yakobi* ran aground on a sand bar and floated off on the next high tide with no damage or injuries. This charter trip took from Spring until fall to complete. William J. Erskine was a member of the U.S. C. & G. Survey on the charter.

[Primarily from a letter written by Betty West Miller, 9/20/2004]

INVENTORY

Folder: Album & Photos #1-100

SERIES II: West-Miller, Converse-Bland Family Photographs

Biographical Timelines:

WEST - MILLER FAMILY TIMELINE

**by
Betty West Miller**

8/30/1915 Pete West married Adelaide Moran in Seattle.

8/10/1916 From this union, LeRoy Francis West was born in Seattle.

1922 Pete West, who was a railroad fireman, and Adelaide West divorced.

1923-1925 Adelaide took son LeRoy West and moved to Sitka where she worked as a cook in the cannery. LeRoy was between 7 and 9 years old at this time.

9/3/1927 LeRoy West arrived in Juneau at the age of 11 years on the Steamer Yukon to come live with his mother Adelaide who was working in Juneau at the time.

4/28/1928 Adelaide West met and married Carl C. Collen and they married in Juneau on this date.

5/6/1929 They must have divorced as on this date they were married again in Ketchikan this time. They later moved to Juneau where Leroy West was enrolled in the school system.

4/27/1935 LeRoy West married school sweetheart and next door neighbor, Berna Converse. They were Junior and Seniors in high school. He began working for the A-J Mine in the electrical division, which included the "lokie" shop located in the Perseverance Basin.

12/2/1935 Son LeRoy West Jr. was born on this date in Juneau, St. Ann's Hospital.

3/13/1936 Norman K. Miller was born in Hartford, Conn.

12/11/1936 Daughter Betty Jean West was born on this date in Juneau, St. Ann's Hospital. Betty Jean was named after her Mother's deceased baby sister.

4/26/1938 Daughter Burnetta Diane West was born on this date in Juneau, St. Ann's Hospital.

1941 West's moved to 419 Twelfth Street, purchasing the house from George & Amey Messerschmidt.

1941 Betty started Kindegarten at the Juneau Public Schools on Fifth Street.

1944 Berna and Betty spent three months in Seattle to treat Betty's crossed eye problem. Ophthalmologist wouldn't do surgery to straighten the eye at that time until vision was restored in lazy eye.

1948 LeRoy and Berna bought their very first and new car (Dodge) and took a 3-month honeymoon with their three kids driving all over the Pacific Northwest.

1951 Graduated from 8th grade (elementary school grades). During this summer, Dr. Leer of Juneau, operated on my crossed eye and straightened it out. Still no sight in the eye.

May 1955 Graduated from J-Hi and the day after, started my first full time office job with the Forest Service as a Clerk-Typist and in three months was promoted to Clerk-Steno.

11/4/1955 Met Norm Miller during Juneau's first snow fall of the season. Norm was in the Coast Guard stationed in Juneau on board the Cutter Storis.

11/2/1956 Norm and I were married in Juneau at the Faith Lutheran Church on 10th and Glacier Ave.

February 1957 Norm and I were transferred to Galveston, TX for his last year in the Coast Guard. First time for me to ever live anywhere else but Juneau for any length of time.

11/2/1957 Our first wedding anniversary I presented Norm with our first baby, a son, named Norman Karl Miller Jr.

Sept. 1958 Norm was discharged from the Coast Guard and home to Juneau we moved.

9/21/1958 Norm began working for Alaska Coastal Airlines in Juneau which eventually became Alaska Airlines.

8/31/1959 Our second son, Daryl Leigh Miller was born at St. Ann's Hospital in Juneau.

1959 Won 2.5 acres of land from the Bureau of Land Management veterans drawing at 16 Mile, Glacier Highway, Juneau.

1963 Improved the property to get deed to land and built an unfinished modest house and coven in. Norm did it all by himself.

1975 Parents LeRoy & Berna West retired from their full time jobs and started their fishing charter trips each summer on board the Westy.

July 1976 My Grandmother Adelaide Moran West Collen passed away in McMinnville, OR where they had retired to in 1963.

7/10/1980 Sold our home and property at Mile 16 and bought a brand new 40-ft. BlueWater Yacht and a new mobile home set up at Switzer Park. Lived on the boat for 8 summers and moved into the mobile home for winters.

2/2/1983 Father-in-law George Miller died.

6/28/1983 Granddaughter Jessica Miller was born in Juneau. Our first grandchild.

10/9/1983 Grandson Jake Miller was born in Juneau. Our first grandson.

10/1985 Grandson Kyle Miller was born in Juneau

12/31/1985 Father LeRoy West Sr. had a heart attack at home just as we were sitting down to the table for dinner and died in Juneau.

5/3/1988 Grandson Luke Miller was born in Juneau.

Nov. 1990 Elizabeth Miller died in Wisconsin.

Dec. 1990 Sold mobile home at Switzer and moved into 4-bedroom condo at Taku Terrace right off of 12th Street where I was raised and where Mom still lived.

11/27/1992 Last grandchild Tessa Miller was born in Juneau.

October 1993 Berna West moved into the Pioneers Home in Juneau and sold her home to the church behind her house.

Sept. 1994 Berna West was told she had inoperable cancer and we celebrated her 77th birthday on 9/28 with a bang.

10/26/1994 Berna West passed away peacefully in the Pioneers Home.

BLAND - CONVERSE FAMILY TIMELINE

**by
Betty West Miller**

9/12/1886 Joseph E. Bland of Skagit Co. in Territory of Washington married Maggie V. Ewing, also from Skagit.

6/6/1900 12th Census - Samish Precinct - Skagit Co. lists:

Joseph Bland (38) farm laborer

Maggie V. Bland (30) housewife

Gertrude Bland (12)

Emma Bland (10)

Ethel M. Bland (7)

Myrtle M. Bland (4)

Wm. Charles Bland (2 months)

8/12/1914 Joseph & Maggie's daughter Gertie Bland Jewell with husband Edward arrived in Douglas from Wash. aboard steamer Humboldt coming to work the mines and later lived at the Chichagof Mines on Chichagof Island.

12/25/1914 Wilbur "Burn" Converse married Myrtle Bland in Edison, Terr. of Wash.

4/3/1916 Blands and Converse arrive in Juneau aboard steamer AI-Ki from Wash. to settle here and work the mines in the Juneau/ Douglas/ Treadwell areas.

12/6/1916 Clarence Converse was born to Burn and Myrtle Converse in Edison, Terr. of Wash. (first born)

9/28/1917 Berna Converse born at Douglas hospital to Burn and Myrtle Converse (second born). Mr. Converse is an Oiler at Treadwell Mining Co.

10/14/1918 Joseph & Maggie Bland move from St. Anns Ave. in Douglas to "The Pines" in Treadwell.

1/28/1919 Myrtle Viola Converse was born in Juneau to Burn and Myrtle Converse (third born).

8/21/1919 Fred Thurman family (Emma Bland) moved from the Ready Bullion into Douglas.

1/16/1920 Burn Converse and family who were living on Gastineau Ave. in Juneau until the mud slide, have moved back to Douglas and are living on St. Ann's Ave.

9/3/1920 Joseph Bland, an employee of the Ready Bullion Mine is in the Douglas Hospital receiving treatment for his eye injury, having lost the sight in his left eye. The accident was caused by a splinter of steel that hit the sight and destroyed it.

9/2/1921 Waldo Converse, Burn's brother, who until recently was employed at the AJ Mine was a passenger on the Princess Alice for his home back to Seattle.

12/2/1921 George Converse born today at home in Treadwell to Burn and Myrtle Converse (fourth child).

7/20/1922 Thurman and Converse families moved from Douglas to Juneau.

1/29/1924 Robert Converse was born in Tacoma, WA to Burn and Myrtle Converse (fifth child).

7/12/1924 Edward Jewell Jr. son born to Ed and Gertie (Bland) Jewell at the family residence in Douglas.

3/18/1925 Ryder born to Burn and Myrtle Converse at their home on 9th Street, Juneau. Mr. Converse is assistant to the chief electrician with AJ Gold Mining Co. (sixth child).

9/29/1927 Emma Bland Thurman died at 38 years of age in Tacoma, Wash, daughter of Joseph & Maggie Bland.

5/13/1928 Sammy Belfried Converse was born to Burn and Myrtle Converse and adopted by Anna & Sam Simonarson as they had no children (seventh child). Anna died years later of TB and Sammy came back to live with his biological parents, Burn & Myrtle Converse.

2/4/1930 Betty Jean Converse born in Juneau to Burn and Myrtle Converse (eighth child).

10/28/1930 Betty Jean Converse, daughter of Burn & Myrtle Converse, died in her crib at eight months.

3/20/1931 Wilbur Converse Jr. "Billy" was born in Juneau to Burn and Myrtle Converse (ninth and last child!).

12/9/1932 Alta Bland Orme Phillips died in Juneau at 25 years of age, daughter of Joseph & Maggie Bland.

10/23/1933 Joseph Bland at 75 years died in Juneau, husband of Maggie Ewing Bland.

7/9/1937 Edward Jewell Sr. died, husband of Gertie Bland Jewell.

5/16/1945 Clarence Converse at 29 years, oldest son of Burn & Myrtle Converse passed away at St. Ann's Hospital. He was 4 months old when he came with his family to live here. He had been ill with heart problems for several years.

9/21/1946 Robert Converse at 22 years of age, son of Burn & Myrtle Converse was killed in his airplane while landing at the Skagway Airport. Bobby was an Army Air Corp veteran.

11/13/1947 Sammy Converse at 19 years of age, son of Burn & Myrtle Converse, was killed in his airplane during a snow storm near Susanville, CA.

10/22/1949 Charles William Bland, son of Joseph & Maggie Bland, died at 49 years after a long illness.

12/28/1950 Margaret Ewing Bland (Mrs. Joseph E. Bland) died at 81 years at St. Ann's Hospital in Juneau. Her husband worked in the mill at Treadwell in the early days.

3/11/1953 Gertrude Bland Jewell, daughter of Joseph & Maggie Bland died in Kelso, WA and her ashes were buried with her husband Edward Jewell in the Juneau Evergreen Cemetery.

1/14/1955 Wilbur "Burn" Converse died at 68 years of age while driving to work at the A-J Warehouse on lower South Franklin Street.

1/9/1967 George Earl Bland, son of Joseph & Maggie Bland, at 56 years died while in St. Ann's Hospital for a broken arm, apparently from a heart attack.

6/23/1974 Myrtle Bland Converse at 79 years died in Juneau from a stroke, daughter of Joseph & Maggie Bland.

11/11/1980 Myrna Bland Martin at 76 years died from heart condition, daughter of Joseph & Maggie Bland.

12/30/1990 Ryder Converse at 65 years, son of Burn and Myrtle Converse, died in Juneau from prostate cancer.

4/23/1994 Billy Converse, son of Burn and Myrtle Converse died at 63 years of age of pneumonia.

10/26/1994 Berna Converse West, daughter of Burn and Myrtle Converse died of cancer at the Juneau Pioneers Home.

10/23/2001 George "Sonny" Converse, son of Burn and Myrtle Converse, died of a heart condition in Port Angeles, WA near his home in Sequim, WA.

10/6/2004 Viola Converse Hanson, daughter of Burn & Myrtle Converse died in Knoxville, TN after a stroke. The last of the original Bland/ Converse family that moved to Juneau/Douglas/Treadwell in the early 1900's.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Photographs include the West-Miller, Bland-Converse families in Juneau and Douglas in the early 1900s.

INVENTORY

Folder: Photos #101-164

101 4 Generation picture- L to R standing : Myrtle Bland Converse, Berna Converse West. Sitting: Great Grandma Maggie Ewing Bland holding her g.g.daughter Betty Jean West 1937 [10th & Egan].

102 L to R: Sister Berna Converse West, bro. Clarence Converse, sis. Viola Converse Hanson.

103 Charles & Brownie (Crosby) Bland. Son of Joseph & Maggie Bland.

- 104 Annette Shanks & Sammy Converse.
- 105 Myrtle Converse's sun porch in house on 10th Street.
- 106 Bill Tonsgard.
- 107 Billy Converse w/ father Burn Converse.
- 108 Little chef Ryder Converse.
- 109 Billy Converse w/Christmas tree in Converse house on 10th Street [color]
- 110 Grandma Maggie Bland w/grandsons, L to R: Sonny, Bobby & Ryder Converse.
- 111 L to R: Berna Converse West, Mother Myrtle Converse, son Geo. "Sonny" Converse.
- 112 LeRoy & Berna West.
- 113 Burnetta Diane West, daughter of LeRoy & Berna West, ca.1941.
- 114 Uncle John Ewing & wife Clara visiting Converse/Bland families in Juneau.
- 115 L to R: George "Sonny" Converse & Hartley "Pete" Crosby.
- 116 L to R: Sammy Converse & Mother Myrtle Converse.
- 117 L to R: Martha "Marty" Wendling Rivers & Myrtle Converse.
- 118 Wilbur "Billy" Converse.
- 119 Clarence Converse played baseball for Douglas Fire Dept.
- 120 LeRoy West Sr.
- 121 LeRoy West Sr. holding son LeRoy Jr. 1936.
- 122 Margaret Ewing Bland, ca. 1940.
- 123 Clara & John Ewing, "Maggie" Bland's uncle & aunt.
- 124 L to R: Brothers Billy & Sammy Converse, ca. 1946.
- 125 Sammy Simonarson Converse.

- 126 George "Sonny" Converse.
- 127 George "Sonny" Converse.
- 128 Clarence Converse (sitting) & LeRoy West Sr.
- 129 "3 Star Mother" w/ sons L to R: George, Robert, & Ryder.
- 130 Father Wilbur Converse w/ daughter Berna & son George.
- 131 LeRoy (Sr.) & wife Berna West, ca. 1935.
- 132 LeRoy West Jr., ca. 1936.
- 133 LeRoy West Jr., ca. 1936.
- 134 L to R: son Clarence Converse, mom Myrtle Converse, dau. Viola Converse, dau. Berna Converse, ca. 1920, Douglas.
- 135 Myrtle Bland Converse.
- 136 Myrtle & Burn Converse in Calif. on vacation.
- 137 Myrtle Bland Converse holding son George "Sonny" Converse, 1921 or 22, St. Ann's in Douglas.
- 138 Viola Converse Hanson. She graduated in 1937 from J-Hi.
- 139 Viola Converse Hanson. She graduated in 1937 from J-Hi.
- 140 Berna West with brother Billy Converse.
- 141 Wilbur "Billy" Converse.
- 142 Brothers: Sammy Converse (tallest), Wilbur "Billy" Converse.
- 143 L to R: "Brothers" Ryder Converse (shortest), George "Sonny" Converse, Robert Converse.
- 144 George "Sonny" Converse, Betty West Miller's uncle.
- 145 Converse siblings: Berna & George "Sonny"

- 146 Wilbur "Bernie" Converse with daughters. Left is Berna & right is Viola. Taken at St. Ann's in Douglas.
- 147 Berna Converse West, Betty West Miller's mother.
- 148 Wilbur Converse residence at 10th & Egan, right where the stop light intersection is today.
- 149 Juneau-Douglas bridge 1935, taken from Douglas Island.
- 150 Myrtle Bland Converse, St. Ann's street in Douglas. Betty West Miller's maternal grandma.
- 151 Berna Converse West, Betty West Miller's mother.
- 152 Margaret "Maggie" Ewing Bland (Mrs. Joseph E. Bland) taken on 10th Street, Juneau - Mt. Juneau in background. Betty West Miller's maternal great grandma.
- 153 Myrtle Bland Converse in her Juneau yard at 10th & Glacier. Betty West Miller's maternal grandma.
- 154 George "Sonny" Converse.
- 155 Clarence Converse & baby (?).
- 156 Berna Converse West, mother to Betty West Miller.
- 157 L to R: Robert Converse, son; father Wilbur "Bernie" Converse; Ryder Converse, son.
- 158 Juneau's Harris Boat Harbor.
- 159 Robert Converse, ca. 1944-45.
- 160 Robert Converse, ca. 1944-45.
- 161 Ove Hanson, Viola Converse's husband.
- 162-164 Berna Converse West.