

Herman Gundlach

Herman Gundlach Junior was born and raised in Houghton Michigan. His parents, Herman Senior and Elvira, welcomed him into the world on July 16, 1913. Herman got his education from the West Houghton Grade School, and then Houghton High School.

As a young boy he showed early signs of success: captian of the Houghton High School football team and working in the construction business with his father. As a teen he took on a job working with his father at the Otter Lake School. Later on, he got his own job down at the train station, where six trains a day came into Houghton, three from the Copper Range Railroad and three from Duluth South Shores. His job was to take a team of horses down to the trains to pick up various goods for different places in the Copper Country. Because of the closeness and caring of his family, Herman's early boyhood gave him a strong foundation to build his future upon. Herman's early boyhood years gave him a strong foundation to build his future upon. His father was like a brother to him; they often went hunting, fishing and played many sports together. His mother and sisters were always kind and loving.

Because of the Depression, times were tough when Herman graduated from high school in 1930. Although his family made ten to fifteen cents an hour, some people only made

Train station job is one reason he recalls Houghton 1900s

five cents a day. Herman's family was not selfish though: they often helped the rest of the community.

Then Herman went to Worcester Academy in Massachusetts where his football career started. Even though his dream was to play for Michigan, an offer to Harvard caught his eye. At Harvard he played football for four years, and in his senior year he was elected captian. He gratuated with a B.S. in Civil Engineering in 1935. Immediately following graduation, he realized a lifelong ambition to play in the National Football Leauge. He played with the 1935 College all-stars against the Chicigo Bears, and for a short time with the Boston Redskins.

After his football career he was employed by Sinclair Refining Company, and in 1938 he married Barbara Kettle in Atlanta, Georgia. Their two oldest children, Gretchen and Martha were born there. In 1940 he opened a general construction business. His earlier experiences as a boy scout prepared him for life, especially the armed services. In 1941 he was called to active duty in the army during World War II, and was discharged as a major in 1945. After world War II he returned to Houghton and established his construction business, which is now Herman Gundlach Inc. His two youngest daughters, Julie and Janna, were born here. Having been a founder of the first N.O.W. chapter in the Upper Peninsula, Herman's wife, Barbara, has been called a "Pioneer" in the movement's resurgence.

At fifty-five years old Barbara returned to college for a masters degree at the University of Michigan.

After Barbara returned from the University of Michigan, she and Herman lived another wonderful fourteen years together.

Then it happened. His one and only love of fifty years, Barbara Jane Kettle, died at the age sixty-nine on May 8, Mother's Day, 1983- this, the biggest change, challenge, pain, and sorrow of Herman's life. The first thing Herman did after the death of his wife was to donate a house in her name to the Shelter Association: The Barbara Kettle Gundlach Shelter for Abused Women. Herman Gundlach turns seventy-seven this July 16th and is still very active in community affairs.

Kathy Koski

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