

# *Penelope Pumpernickel: Mystery Maven*

by MaryAnn Diorio

## *The Mystery of the Loose Brick*

**H**i! My name is Penelope Pumpernickel, but my friends call me

Penny Pump for short. I am eight years old, and I'm a homeschooler. Homeschoolers go to school at home. Their teacher is usually their mom, their dad, or someone else who takes care of them.

If you were with me on my earlier adventures, you'll know that I love to solve mysteries. That's the reason my BFF, Tilly Mendoza, calls me the Mystery Maven. Maven means an expert at something, so I guess I'm an expert at solving mysteries. I should be by now, because I have had to solve a plethora of them. *Plethora* means a lot.

How about you? Do you like to solve mysteries? If so, you are in the right place at the right time. :)

I'm also a maven at alliteration. Alliteration is the act of putting two words that start with the same letter side by side: like Mystery Maven. Tilly calls me the Queen of Alliteration. I call her the Queen of Ideas. So, we're both queens!

You may remember my fellow homeschooler, Grandville Ungerleider. Grandy is the reason for virtually all the mysteries I have had to solve. *Virtually* means almost. He himself is the biggest mystery of all.

Grandy came to my homeschool group not long after his father died. It's hard not having a dad to talk to when you have a problem. But did you know that we all have a Father in Heaven Who wants us to talk to Him? His name is God, and He's the coolest Father ever. I call him *Abba*. That means *Daddy* in Hebrew.

Anyway, the last time we were together, Grandy had stolen Mrs. Limerick's maps from our classroom closet. I found one of them at the back of the library bookshelf in our geography classroom. But Grandy had hidden the other maps behind a loose brick in the front hall of the church where our Homeschool

Consortium meets every week. Do you remember what consortium means? It means group.

After Grandy showed me the loose brick, I couldn't stop thinking about it. I told Tilly, and she said that our next adventure should be to find out what was behind that loose brick.

Which brings me to the adventure I need to tell you about now.

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