UPSCALE SALE EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

Last weekend's first Upscale Sale was a huge hit. The more than $7,000 (with more to come) profit will be used for the Society's mission-related projects -- the Old School House Discovery Center and the Saugatuck-Douglas Museum. The success of the project was due to both the quality and quantity of donations made by both Society and community members. Thanks to all our donors for your support.

The Friday evening Preview Party and Sale was a fun and successful event even though the weather did not cooperate. Saturday's weather and crowd of shoppers were outstanding. Special thanks to the great team who lead this project - Vic Bella, Judy Anthrop, Janet Schmidt, Peg Sanford, John Peters, Tony Vettori, Fred Schmidt, Nancy Woods, Steve Hutchins and Bill Hess. A special call-out to Sally Winthers who developed the

LITTLE BIG TOP

From the Sunday, July 5, 2009 Holland Sentinel written by Jim Hayden. Bob and Kay Sapita are members of the Society

Outside the big top of the Al G. Barnes Circus, the band wagon, pulled by eight horses, slowly slides by.

Under the canvas, the Girl Scouts stare, transfixed by the lion walking the tightrope.

Trapeze artists swing to the top of the tent. There is no fear because the safety net is taut.

Bob Sapita knows — the Douglas man tied the tiny ropes himself. And his dad built the big top scene from the ground up.

Now hundreds of people will get to see the miniature circus world at the Circus Model Builders International convention in Peru, Ind., at the end of the month.
UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- Wednesday, August 12, Annual Potluck Picnic at Mt. Baldhead Park. Chips and dips at 6 PM, dinner at 6:30. Please bring your best culinary creation for the buffet table and your own tableware. After dinner we are going to have a surprise! Any questions, call Jane at 857-2268.

- Wednesday, September 9, 7 PM at the Old School House. Old Time Cottage Life in the Saugatuck-Douglas area as remembered by some old cottagers. Come and hear about the trials and joys of living in an old cottage.

- Wednesday, October 14, 7 PM at the Old School House. Program to be announced.

TUESDAY TALKS

**Tuesday 'Til Noon** talks continue promptly at 11 AM every Tuesday through August at the Old School House. The 2009 season focuses on *"Summertime - A Century of Leisure at the Lake Michigan Shore"*.

- July 28 - The life and times of the Lake Park Trailer Camp along the shore of Lake Michigan south of Pier Cove in Ganges Township is the subject of a

"This is American history," said Kay Sapita, Bob’s wife. "This is recreated from pictures, photos, newspaper articles. It’s all based on fact."

Bob had the one-quarter-inch scale model of a 1930s circus spread out on its 10-foot-by-20-foot platform in his garage last week, checking out a million details, from the chain driving the parade to the motors twirling the acrobats.

The miniature world started with that love of detail. Bob’s father, John, began building model circus wagons in the 1940s. The elder Sapita, who retired from Bethlehem Steel in Pennsylvania as an engineer, was not a circus performer but grew up near circus grounds. He applied his eye for mechanical detail to building scale models of circus wagons. John was inducted into the Circus Model Builder’s Hall of Fame in recognition of his skill as a model builder.

"Dad was building with these kits, but the kits were just a little off scale," Kay said about her father-in-law’s early hobby. So, he scrapped the kits and started...
presentation by its founder, Harv Busscher.

Busscher, one of the area’s best known contractors and a fine story-teller, will relate how the camp grew up out of an abandoned gravel pit business to become an interesting summertime community with summer residents from all over the United States (and beyond).

• August 4 - Few people know as much of the history of Saugatuck’s Ox-Bow Summer School of Painting and the Arts than Judy Anthrop, the author of a new book on Ox-Bow. This week Judy will tell about the people who lived in the many artist and student cottages - and shaped the structures to reflect their artistic whims and lives.

This is truly a set of 'inside' stories. Some may recall several years ago when Judy, along with Kay Smalley, presented a lively Tuesday Talk on the so-called sheriff of Ox-Bow, Mary Kay Beatles.

• August 11 - James Cook is a well-known professional photographer who has captured the Lake Michigan shore and all facets of its human and ecological life in spectacular form. Here he will use his camera to show how photography allows us to look at our landscape in new ways - indeed bringing up the building from scratch.

The to-scale red wagons in the display are alive with details such as metal racks on the side of the vehicle that held table tops and individually painted spokes in the wheels.

His favorite circus wagons came from the Barnes show. "The Al G. Barnes were very rugged wagons. He liked that," said Bob, a retired electrical engineer.

Before his death in 2002, John had built more than 500 wagons representing several circuses, carnivals and wild west shows.

John’s attention to accuracy permeates the large display. His son, a circus fan but, he laughs, not a fanatic, points to hidden craftsmanship with a flair of a P.T. Barnum.

"This is how the roustabouts lived in a flea-infested bed," Bob said as he lifted the roof off a circus rail car. He pointed to the miniature map on the rail car wall.
fact that photography is a way for us to form memory.

- August 18 - Pete Mathews sketches out some of the highlights of one of the area’s most forgotten local industries, that of commercial fishing, and how and why it went into decline in the decades following World War Two - and how it was replaced by a new industry, that of sport fishing. What were the conditions that led to this change and who were its winners and losers? Mathews is the vice president of the South Haven Maritime Museum.

- August 25 - Bill Plium spent much of his 1950s childhood and then teen and college years at Oval Beach as an observer of the social life of this, one of Michigan’s most famous beaches. His parents were the originators of the beach’s concession business, first in a small trailer built by his Dad and then in a series of beach houses.

In this enterprise, they invented a food and drink menu that today is a virtual food history of the 1950s - as well witnessed the 'golden age' of Saugatuck's beach life, complete with all sorts of characters [e.g. Grover Stout, known as "Mayor of the Beach"] as well as the 1950s and 1960s when the Oval Beach was invaded by teens of young people to make it Michigan’s Ft. Lauderdale.

and the slot machine tucked away in a corner of the car.

Farther down, posters entice townies to visit the bearded lady and watch the sword swallower — and, yes, the sword moves.

"It takes a lot of time to set up," Bob added. The display is already back in storage for the trip to Indiana. The Sapitas are hoping to display the circus locally in the future. They have lived in Douglas for three years. Kay is a retired church organist/music director.

SDHS 101

Another "SDHS 101" is coming up! New members, as well as former members, are invited to attend an informational meeting concerning the Society's history, programs, and opportunities for volunteering.

The session will be held at the Old School House Discovery Center at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 22nd. If you plan to participate, please call Nyla Hensley at email noteablenyla@yahoo.com or call 269-857-5704.

ANCESTRY.COM AT THE LIBRARY

The Saugatuck-Douglas District Library is pleased to offer the Ancestry database to patrons researching genealogy or local history. Ancestry is the largest online genealogy resource available with over 4000 complete databases and 4 billion names from the US and around the world. In addition, Ancestry includes census data of maps, military, immigration, DAR
The Society recently acquired a signed May Heath painting. The date on the back is 1956. Two other paintings, not signed, are also possibly attributed to her.

submitted by Mary Voss

The Ancestry subscription requires that access be limited to in-Library patrons, but the service is available to all. Patrons can use library terminals, including wireless, for complete access to the database. Staff at the Library is on hand to assist access. Stop by and check it out.

The Library is located at the corner of Mixer and Center Streets in Douglas just across from the Old School House. Hours are M-Th 10-8, Fr 10-6, Sa 10-2, Su 1-4

SAUGATUCK WOMAN MARRIED TO JAY GOULD?

The Oct. 12, 1894 issue of the Commercial Record reported a claim that a former Saugatuck resident was the first wife of the late financier and “Robber Barron” Jay Gould (1836-1892). Sarah Ann Brown had lived in Saugatuck in a small cottage by the ferry about 1880-82 under the name of Mrs. Youngpeter. She supposedly was briefly married as a young girl to Mr. Gould, with the product being a daughter, born after a divorce and never revealed to Mr. Gould.

It took a couple years for the issue to reach the courts. An 1897 New York Times article gives details of an affidavit by the reputed daughter's husband, J. F. Pierce, a printer, coal miner and populist politician of...
A note to our faithful volunteers:

It's hard to believe that more than half the year has already gone by. Looking over the volunteer hours data I realized that many of you have not been faithful in reporting your time. Please look over your calendar and try to remember all the time and effort that you have spent on behalf of the Society.

Were you involved with the Pub Party and Bowling fund raiser? How about the recent successful Upscale Garage Sale? Are you now, or were you earlier this year, part of a planning committee for the Museum exhibit or the Old School House pathway project? All those hours count up. Grant awarding organizations look at those hours to determine the interest the community has in supporting a museum. Just an estimate is fine, most of our memories are pretty short when it comes to giving away our time. Please send those hours to sdhsvol@verizon.net

PS: All the volunteer hosting hours at the museum are turned in by Bill Hess so those don't need to be sent in.

Since I am now taking on more duties in the Archives Department I am looking for a volunteer who would be willing to take over the task of recording hours. It can easily be done from your home computer. Contact me, Mary Voss, at maryjvoss@sbcglobal.net for more information.

MUSEUM ATTENDANCE CONTINUES RECORD PACE

Rock Springs, Wyoming:

"My wife is the oldest and only legitimate child of the late Jay Gould. Her mother was Sarah Ann Brown of Rouse's Point, Clinton County, N.Y. She was married to Jay Gould on May 16, 1853, in New York City. It was a child marriage, Jay Gould lacking a few days of eighteen years of age, and Miss Brown being only a little past fifteen years. The child, now Mrs. Pierce, was born when her mother was only a little past sixteen years of age. Mr. Gould and his wife were incompatible, and separated before the birth of the girl on Feb. 15, 1854." Pierce goes on to tell how the mother returned to Rouse's Point, calling herself "Mrs. Brown", but being a Catholic, never applied for a divorce. After Gould's marriage in 1856, Sarah Ann gave the baby over for adoption to a family named Morton. In 1866 the Mortons moved to Hamilton, MO. Pierce writes. "The grandmother of my wife, I understand, is still living, her home being in Saugatuck, Michigan."

The April 9, 1897 issue of the Commercial Record reports: "Attorneys for the heirs of Mary (Sarah) Ann (Brown) Angell, who claims to have been the lawful wife of the late Jay Gould, have been here several times during the past winter, trying to secure evidence from her relatives to use in the pending law suit in which they endeavor to secure a share of the Gould estate. The woman lived here several years ago and has relatives at this place and at Douglas." Involved in pushing this claim and in seeking money from the Gould estate was a Mrs. Cody of Denver, CO. Mrs. Angell eventually changed her story and denied her marriage to Gould, but Mrs. Cody was charged with blackmail and convicted in 1899.

The Commercial Record article of 1894 lists local relatives of Miss Sarah Ann Brown Angell as J. H. Brown of Saugatuck (1830 Rouses Point, NY-1910 Saugatuck) and Mrs. A. W. (Frances Brown) Walker (1846-1924 Douglas). These two were the children of Mrs. Emily Brown (1818 Rouse’s Point, NY-1900 Saugatuck), who we can assume was the grandmother of Mrs. Pierce. submitted by Chris Yoder
Visitors from all over the US and the world - England, Germany, Vietnam, Sweden, the Bahamas, to name a few - are experiencing "Summertime" at the Saugatuck-Douglas Museum. Attendance is up over 40% this year. All components of this year's exhibit are being praised. Kids specially love the "Summertime Post Office" where they can make their own post cards. Some young artists send their creations to friends and relatives back home, while others post it at the Museum as a reminder of their visit. Super Map continues to be a crowd pleaser, as well.

If you haven't volunteered to be a host at the Museum, consider it. Its a fun, rewarding experience to meet the many interesting visitors and add to your knowledge of the area's history. Contact Bill Hess at (269) 857-1081 or by e-mail at wwh71@comcast.net to learn how to sign-up

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**James Cook: A Photographic Study of Dunes, Lake and River**

**Tuesday Talk - August 11**
The Kalamazoo River and our piece of the Lake Michigan shoreline enjoy a fascinating blend of natural and human history. Neither tending to dominate the other.

Throughout modern man's involvement here, preservation and development have been at odds. Today the debate over land use goes on.

Photographs from yesterday and today provide us with long term memory across generations. They allow us an opportunity to observe and ponder our past and present impact, and how our own era will one day be viewed.

submitted by Society Board member James Cook
HISTORY MYSTERIES
by Jack Sheridan
(Answers are at the bottom of the Newsletter)

HISTORY: The family had the concession for many years.
MYSTERY: What is going on here?

HISTORY: Rooms, meals and dancing the sign proclaimed. It boasted the longest bar in Michigan.
MYSTERY: What, where, when?

HISTORY: For 25 years the Interurban turned around at the corner of Culver, Butler and Water Streets.
MYSTERY: What were the first and last years?

HISTORY: For over a hundred years a hotel has graced this spot.
MYSTERY: Name the hotels.
ABOUT THE SOCIETY

To become a member or renew your membership select from the following categories:

- Individual: $25
- Household: $45
- Senior (65+): $18
- Senior Household: $30
- Student: $5
- Corporate: $150
- Life, Individual: $300
- Life, Household: $500

Send check payable to the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society to: PO Box 617, Douglas, Michigan 49406. You can also click HERE for a Society Membership Application.

Send items for the newsletter to: Fred Schmidt, PO Box 617, Douglas MI 49406 or email info@sdhistoricalsociety.org

MUSEUM AND TECH CENTER

The Saugatuck-Historical Museum is located in the historic Pump House at the foot of Mt. Baldhead on the west bank of the Kalamazoo River. The Museum's 2009 exhibit is titled:

"Summertime: A Century of Leisure at the Lake Michigan Shore"

The Museum is open daily from Noon to 4 PM through Labor Day and on weekends in September and October from Noon to 4 PM.

The Society's Technology Center is open Monday from 1 to 4 p.m., Tuesdays 10 a.m. to noon and Wednesday 9 a.m. to noon.

Society Phone: 269 857-5751    Museum Phone: 269 857-7900
Tech Center Phone 269 857-7901
www.sdhistoricalsociety.org

Share on the corner of Perry and Water Streets.

Lower left: The Plum family sold many lots on top of the old beach parking lot ca. 1930.

Lower right: The Hardings house in Douglas, center of center, and Perry about 1935.

Upper left: The Fruit House and the old Twitchell hotel (shown above ca. 1935) and now the ship and