NOTES FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Summer is here and your Historical Society is busy as usual. We are looking for volunteers for the Museum, Walking Tours, and soon "The Barrel". Museum and Walking Tour volunteers get to meet the nicest people, tell them about our Society and local history and answer the most often asked question: "Where is the best place to eat?" Please contact Bill Hess for the Museum and yours truly for the Walking Tours. Additional volunteer help is needed at the Old School House in Douglas. It is open from 1 to 3 pm Monday through Friday, with the help of Maddie Granrud, one of our summer interns. She would love to have some help with our visitors. The four interns we have this summer, Madelyn Granrud, Patrick Pozinzinki, Patrick Pawlak and Jennifer Fisher have been a big help in the Museum and OSH as well as working in programming and archives. They are getting to many projects that we have wanted to do for a long time but have not found the time to do so.

The garden project is coming along. We expect to have the Francis Life Boat building done by August 31, along with the walkways, the Mt. Baldhead observation deck and most of the plantings in the various gardens. Some planting will have to wait till later in the fall or even next spring. The determining factor will be what is best for the plants.

Something new. We are going to try to keep our members informed when we learn of the passing of one of our members. The Society has over 400 members from coast to coast and many do not see the local papers for such
announcements. We will try to include those announcements when we can but since the newsletter only comes out once a month it may not be the fastest way of reporting this information. The first of these we are reporting on are Fitz Coughlin Jr., Julie Kelly and Marjorie Sorensen. Fitz passed away in late January. He, along with his wife Thelma, was a major supporter of the Old School House and the gardens. Julie Kelly was also a supporter of the Old School House. She and Ed donated the glass donor walls at the entrance to the Old School House. She passed away in mid May. Marjorie Sorensen was a long time member and supporter of our Society. Marge passed away on June 16.

Our July 13th program meeting sponsored by Arlene Sherman, 'From Fishing Tug, to Net, to Market and Fry Pan,' with intern Patrick Pawlak, will include a fish fry dinner at the WayPoint Restaurant in Douglas. I'm really looking forward to that! Hope to see you there. Your President Harold Thieda

6. August 9 In the Path of the Great Tornado of 1956: Saugatuck's Lighthouse - and more - Destroyed, sponsored by Terry Burns
7. August 16 Fire, Murder, and Robbery by Jack Sheridan, sponsored by the Saugatuck Brewing Company
8. August 23 Looking at Paintings and Finding Self by Mary Jo Lemanski, sponsored by Water Street Gallery
9. August 30 The Douglas Root Beer Barrel: Good Times and Highway Architecture, sponsored by Osman Flowers and Firs

These fun and informal talks will take place on Tuesdays, 11am at the Old School House History Center in Douglas. Free admission. Click HERE to download and print a schedule poster in your choice of color for your frig.


The Old School House is open Monday-Friday, 1:00pm-3:00PM

Our summer intern, Maddie, will be on hand to show you around.

BILL HESS AND MARY VOSS WIN TOP ANNUAL HONORS
Saugatuck's Bill Hess has received the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society's top-honor Charles J. Lorenz Award of Achievement for 2011 and Mary Voss, Holland, has won the Society's Volunteer Of The Year Award.

The Lorenz Award was established by the Society in 1997 to honor the memory of Charles Lorenz, who gave generously of his time, talent, money and energy in the formation and development of this organization. Winners are selected each year by a special Society committee, recognizing distinguished leadership in fulfilling the Historical Society's mission to "help the community understand its past and use its history to shape its future and preserve its quality of life".

Hess was cited for his efforts over the past five years in recruiting, training, scheduling and managing the Society's volunteers at its Pump House Museum, initiating its "Upscale Sale" to benefit the Old School House project, chairing and arranging catering for various special events, and serving his second term on the Society's Board of Directors.

A Saugatuck resident since 2004, after more than two decades of owning and visiting a vacation cottage here during his career with Montgomery Ward in Chicago, Hess also is completing his second term on the Saugatuck City Council, where he serves as Mayor Pro Tem.

Too much clutter making you scream?

Donate those treasures to the Upscale Sale. Your charitable contribution will be tax deductible, you’ll help the Society cover its operating expenses, and you’ll gain some priceless space!

Click HERE for a flyer with all the details. The donation dates Saturdays, 9am - noon except July 2, Tuesdays, 4 - 6pm and Mondays to Fridays, 1 - 3pm.

Can't move it yourself? Call Vic Bella at 269-857-3600 to arrange for a handsome man to pick up your items.

Upscale Sales' New Option
Don't Want to Give it Away? Consign it!

If you have a special treasure that you don't want to give away, but won't mind parting with for cash, the Upscale Sales' new consignment sale is right up your alley.

Its easier than eBay and both you and SDHS benefit!

Here's how it works:

● You select up to three items that you would like to sell on consignment (minimum selling price is $250) at the Upscale Sale. The preview sale is Friday, July 15 and the sale is July 16.
● Click HERE to get a copy of the "Consignment Sales Agreement" form. Mail the completed form as indicated.
● Deliver your items to the Old School House during the specified period.
● Upscale Sale staff will have your items on display during the
The Volunteer Of The Year Award honors outstanding service to the Society during the past year. Candidates are nominated by standing committee chairs, with current Board members excluded from eligibility, and winners are selected by majority vote of the Board.

Voss's selection for this award recognizes her continuing contributions as the Society's archivist and records keeper. She joined SDHS shortly after she and husband Ron purchased a cottage on Lake Michigan near Pier Cove in 1999. Then recently retired as an administrative assistant and wanting to keep current on computer technology, she volunteered to help in Society's Technical Center and started with scanning old photos and historical issues of the Commercial Record. Drawing upon previous work experience at the Holland Museum, she began computerizing SDHS archival information, donation records and volunteer hours. She also was an SDHS Board member for three years.

GLAD YOU ASKED

"Glad You Asked" is a new column to answer questions that have been asked by Society members. Hopefully the information will be informative to all members.

Q. I understand it was decided not to produce a new Members Directory this year. Why is that?

A. Yes, you are correct. A Members Directory will not be produced for 2011. There are a number of reasons.

The Directory cost about $1,000 to print and mail each year. For the last two years SDHS has obtained directory sponsors to offset the expenses involved with production and mailing. This year there were not an enough sponsors to cover the costs.

We have found that the directory does not change significantly from year to year. There is a surplus of 80 directories from last year so there is an adequate supply to send to new members. A listing of new members since the 2010 directory was printed is available to anyone who

The Village Table A Delicious History of Food in the Saugatuck-Douglas Area
By Stacy Honson and Kit Lane

is available at the Saugatuck-Douglas Museum and can be ordered online by clicking HERE.

If you love Saugatuck, or you love food, you’ll love this unique book. All proceed benefit the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society. Soft cover books are $35. Limited-edition* (hand bound) hard cover books are $125.

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If your item(s) sell at the Upscale Sale you will receive 60% of the selling price and SDHS will receive 40%. (You and SDHS pay MI sales tax proportionally.)

- If your item(s) were not sold, you will need to pick them up no later than Friday, July 22.
- If your item was sold, SDHS will mail you a check for an amount equal to 60% of the selling price (less MI sales tax) no later than Friday, July 29, 2011.

If you have any questions, REPLY to this email and an Upscale Sale committee member you get in touch with you.
wishes to have a copy.

The SDHS Board continues to look for ways to reduce expenses in order to ensure that the Society has the funds available to continue to support our mission-based projects and programs. The annual printing of a Members Directory was not cost effective. The on-going plan is to print Members Directories every two years.

Q. I want to support SDHS by making a donation to the Upscale Sale. What can I donate?

A. Honestly, we are not very picky. We want your curiosities, oddities, treasures, the "OMG what is THAT" gift from Aunt Martha, art, antiques, small scale furniture, housewares, small appliances, and typical garage sale stuff.

We would like you to KEEP the clothes off your (or anyone else's) back, your old Philco TV, Naugahyde sectional, Betamax, stuff you think belongs in the trash and the like.

And remember, we will gladly give you a receipt to take a tax deduction for your donation.

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome these new members who have joined the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society since the last newsletter.

- Bridget McCormack, Ann Arbor, MI
- Keith Walker, Saugatuck, MI

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SOCIETY’S FINANCES

*Attention book collectors*; Only eleven limited-edition copies of *The Village Table* remain. To reserve yours, please email Sally at swinthers@frontier.com

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Otis Russell Johnson

The feature photo shows that Otis Russell Johnson was a strikingly handsome man. From a study of his accomplishments, I conclude that he was also a determined hard worker. Of solid Yankee stock O. R. was born in Maine in 1815. He was the son of a tanner - shoemaker and apprenticed in the same trade. He came west to Coldwater, Michigan about 1845 and to the Saugatuck area two years later. About 1847 he built a tannery on Goshorn Creek in Dingleville. He also established a tannery in Plummerville and was a partner in a general store in downtown Saugatuck.

But his big money success was the lumber business. He partnered with Frank B. Stockbridge – the future U. S. Senator – in the lumber milling business. They owned mills located in Saugatuck and in Singapore. Because of the 1870s calamitous fires, the business boomed. Their three lumber schooners ran full time on the Lake. Johnson and Stockbridge finally ran out of trees in 1875 when they dismantled and moved the last Singapore mill to St. Ignace.

O. R. Johnson married Emily Wells of Saugatuck in 1853 and they had six children. He built a large home on the
corner of Mason and Griffith [now the Chemical Bank site] and he was one of the founders of the Saugatuck Episcopal Church.

With the end of Michigan timber, Johnson moved to Racine, Wisconsin where he continued in the lumber business. In addition, he and his sons invested in western timber and the family is well known in California. He died in Racine in 1895.

The scene below may be familiar – how many of the characters do you know? Find out more next month.
If you have any questions on the above, please contact the Society's Treasurer, Stacy Honson at stacyhonson@hotmail.com

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**REV. THOMSON Writes of Saugatuck Folklore**

In the April 2011 newsletter, we shared a number of poems by the Reverend Alexander Thomson (1844-1914). In the Commercial Record of Nov. 29, 1907, Thomson recorded in poetry what he was told to be a true event of almost forty years before. Thomson introduced his poem by describing how the romance of history adds to the charm of Saugatuck:

*Saugatuck is indeed one of the beautiful spots of nature. I have seen the lift of the mountains awful in their sublimity; I have looked at the roaring foam white rivers that rush among the passes and valleys; I have seen the white ocean like stretch of the prairies; but for quiet and restful beauty I have never seen the equal of Saugatuck.*

*But the interest in a place grows as it becomes associated with the history and romance of mankind. It is not the mountain lakes and heather of themselves that draws thousands of visitors to the highlands of Scotland every year, but Rob Roy, Scott, Wallace and Bruce. The treasures of history and romance increase the charm a hundred fold. So with our pretty little village of Saugatuck and its environment. Let us surround it with history, song and romance. This poem is a story substantially as I heard it from an old citizen of Saugatuck now residing in Two Rivers, Wis.*

Thomson tells of post-Civil War Saugatuck, where an argument between a southern sympathizer and a Michigan native led to a shooting, and to a narrowly averted lynching---with a local minister as the hero of

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**Historical Society Acquires First Sylvia Randolph Painting**

Barb Crandell, a Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society member has generously donated a watercolor painting by Sylvia Randolph. It is the first piece by Sylvia to join the Historical Society's permanent art collection. This warm autumn image of the Saugatuck-Douglas area is a beautiful example of Sylvia's later work. The painting is hanging with the current exhibition of the Saugatuck-Douglas Art Collection in the upstairs gallery at the Old School House in Douglas. The gallery and Old School House building will be open for public viewing Monday-Friday from 1-3PM through Labor Day.

The Art Project has established a goal to restore and "stabilize" a large portion of the extensive Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society collection. A budget has been drafted to determine that we need to raise approximately $4,000 to stabilize the entire collection. Many of the projects involve only minor repairs to the artwork, some with the price tag as little as $50. You have the opportunity to participate in the restoration of our collection by sponsoring one or more artworks. As sponsorships are acquired work can begin on specific items. We are hoping to have the entire collection restored within the next year.

For more information or if you would like to donate, please contact Ken Kutzel at (269) 857-4475.

Thank you, Ken Kutzel Madelyn Granrud
A "Hot Spur" from the southern land
Came northward till he struck
The forest walled, and sawdust streets.
Of "Booming" Saugatuck.
Then men were free with fist and tongue,
And he who had the better lung,
In wordy wars might hope to be,
King of the pine woods chivalry.

In these old days when the place was new
The Metled Hot Spur of the south,
Managed to find a job to do
But could not manage his mouth.
Proud of spirit he could not brook
The bantering word, or saucy look
Of the pine wood boys who found delight
In rousting the ire of the southern knight.

Hot he whose temper's a run way steed,
Is likely to find e're his day is done,
He may have to pay in his flesh and blood,
Full tale for his wild eyed run.
There came a day when his southern ire
Like steel from a flint struck fiercest fire,
In a trice his pistol was out and then,
Down in the dust lay one of our men.

Down by the river the village jail
(A queer old shant) had its place
And there subdued and quiet and pale
The man with the pistol ended his race.
For well he knew that a storm was brewing
That a judge would sit on his saving and doing
A judge that never sat on a bench
Whose law was his passion, the stern Judge Lynch.

He came that night with his many tongues
Wild of heart and of will,
He gave his decree from the vere start
In the brief and terrible syllable kill.
Nor neither the jail nor the man inside
Had favor with that tumultuous tide
Of men, and they cried: "Down with him forever

The "knight of the Lord's own chivalry" was the Rev. J. Rice Taylor of the Saugatuck Episcopal Church. Kit Lane writes about this episode in her book The Day the Elephant Died. Walter Philbrooks, a book keeper for local sawmill operator O. R. Johnson, had an argument with Charley Boyle of Rabbit River, chased him from his office, and shot him. The "rest of the story" is not exactly as the poem would have it. The initial newspaper report which appeared July 23, 1870 in the Lake Shore Commercial (now Commercial Record) indicates that Rev. Taylor talked to the angry crowd "without seeming to gain much besides abuse". After a while, the men dispersed by themselves and the deputies of the law took the prisoner out of town to the Allegan jail to await trial. Boyle, originally thought to be fatally wounded, survived. While the local newspaper beat the drums against Philbrooks, the Allegan paper, at the urging of "reputable citizens of Saugatuck" (likely his employer Johnson), tried to "set the record straight". Claims had been made that
The jail and the jail bird into the river."

Philbrooks was a Rebel soldier and killed many Yanks, that he had been a secretary to Jeff Davis himself, and that he raised a Rebel flag on the Saugatuck Liberty pole. All was denied, only admitted was that he had been a clerk in the Confederate Treasury Department in Richmond. Following a trial, during which the "alleged victim" Boyle proved an unconvincing witness, the judge dismissed the case. Claims were persistent that local money interests had influenced the result.

O. R. Johnson moved his family to Racine, Wisconsin in 1876, but what became of Walter Philbrook? In his 1902 work *The Hamlin Family* (Available on Google Books) Henry Franklin Andrews writes:

{\textit{Walter Philbrook was born July 1836 in Winthrop, ME. He lived in Mobile, Alabama before the civil war. He was a bank teller and a bookkeeper. He served in a Mobile, Alabama regiment of the Confederate Army. He was wounded in the right shoulder at Shiloh. Saugatuck, Allegan County, MI, 1866-79. Walter Philbrook and Abby Ladd were married 16 Sep. 1875 in Bangor, ME. Independent in politics. For years he was in an asylum for softening of the brain. He died 27 Apr. 1888 in St. Louis, MO.}}

Rev. Taylor, it seems, was a less than effective "knight of chivalry," but he did try. And Walter Philbrook saw more action in Confederate service than just as a "Clerk in the Confederate Treasury." Not quite in the league of a Big Blue Ox and a giant woodsman, but a nice tale anyway. We would all do well to remember Thomson's words when he said of Saugatuck:

"Let us surround it with history, song and romance."

\textit{contribution by Chris Yoder}
Certain historical events etch themselves indelibly in your mind. Dec. 7th will mark the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. For those of you (or members of your families) on the "sunny side" of 75, you may recall where you were and what were you doing when you learned that the Japanese had attacked America. I'm collecting memories from our members, their families and other local folks which can be assembled, put on the web, and shared at the approach to this anniversary later this year.

Mel Hershaw recalls Tripp's Drugs Store (formerly Bird Drug Store, and now Landshark's) as a place where young people loved to assemble. Its owners were much more amenable to youth than the older and more staid folk at Parrish's. Mel was "hanging out" in front of Tripp's, when someone came out to share that the news of the attack had just come across the radio.

Gather up your memories, or those of older family members and friends and send them along: Chris Yoder at email: cyoder@tds.net, phone: 269-857-4327, or mail at: 551 S. Maple St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

MEMORIES OF MAY FRANCIS HEATH: A SERIES

May Heath Goes To Europe
In September of 1930, May and Doc went to Canada by way of Port Huron, and on to London and Niagara Falls. In March 1933 May wrote in her diary that Mrs. Franklin Job, and daughter Cordelia were enthused about the trip to Europe they and she were planning for the next year, "Hope it all comes true, but a year is a long look ahead". No trip took place, perhaps due to the impacts of the depression.

A visit to Cuba did occur during one of her winter stays in Florida, but it was not until 1954, at the age of 81, that May launched her European adventure. She traveled with her art teacher from Ft. Worth, Florida, Mrs. Marie Steffe, a francophone. After celebrating her birthday with daughter Bette in New York, May 13, 1953, they sailed the next day aboard the French liner "Liberte". They arrived in Plymouth, England on the 20th, and spent two weeks in "the Shakespeare county". Always the writer, her travel diary shows that she had sent off 135 postcards by the time they arrived in London, where they stayed a week.

On May 31st, they crossed the English Channel to Oostende. Traveling through Brussels, and the Netherlands, on they went to Paris, which was to be their headquarters over the summer. In the Commercial Record article published before her departure, May laughingly told of her "big desire" --- "having her picture taken while sitting at a sidewalk café" (which you can see DID come about from the picture above).

Her diary outlines the sites and the interesting people they met. Touristy visits included the Louve, Versailles, Notre Dame Cathedral, Napoleon's tomb, and the Follies Begere.

After a full month, they began their trip home on "the Liberte" June 25th from LeHavre. May was an excellent sailor, but her travel companion suffered from sea-sickness. May wrote of the shipboard entertainment: "The dance very Pretty- lovely gowns. They gave fans and hats as favors. One old duffer, a German, asked me to waltz. No! No! But he paid me a lovely complement at my age it was wonderful. I used no make-up and nature had been very good to me and kept me 81 yrs young. (Flattery) but I like it!" A nice memory as her adventure was coming to a close.

contributed by Chris Yoder

This series on Saugatuck Historian May Francis Heath (MFH) will continue until the 50th anniversary of her death in September, 2011. The MFH Study Group continues to seek information, documents, photographs of May, her paintings, and personal recollections of Mrs. Heath. If you have any to share contact: Chris Yoder at 269-857-4327 or Marsha Kontio at 616-566-1239.
ABOUT THE SOCIETY

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

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<td>Individual</td>
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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-Douglas Historical Society History 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 2011 exhibit is titled:

A Village Patchwork:
Everyday Life in Saugatuck-Douglas
The Museum is open daily from noon to 4pm through August and weekends in September and October with the new exhibit. Click HERE to learn more about the Museum and view images of the 2010 exhibit.

The Society's Technology Center is located in the lower level of the Old School House History Center at 130 Center Street in downtown Douglas.

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