As part of the Society's Silver Anniversary Campaign, the Society Newsletters are being underwritten by a generous donation from Frances Vorys, a Society Life member.

Still haven't renewed your Society membership for 2012?? Don't miss out on a great year of **Events** and much more! RENEW NOW! Click [HERE](#).

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14 PROGRAM**

**The Wages of Sin and Other Tales**  
with Marsha Kontio  
7 p.m., Old School House History Center

So, sit back and relax and join in a walking tour of Douglas. We will visit old haunts, talk about the early day of Douglas and see what "dirt" we can uncover.

Are you aware that a gas station use to sit in the middle of Douglas?

**2012 EVENTS CALENDAR**

The Society's Programming and Member Activities Schedule for 2012 has just been finalized. You can see the complete calendar by [CLICKING HERE](#). You can also access the most current calendar from the Society's website.

**STILL TIME TO SPONSOR A MONTHLY PROGRAM**

These fun and informal programs will continue on Wednesday, March 14th. A schedule with topics and speakers is shown below. For only $125 you can SPONSOR A MONTHLY PROGRAM! You will be acknowledged as a sponsor of the program on the press release, the Society's website, newsletter and at the Program. Just [REPLY](#) to this email and let us know which Program you would like to help sponsor and we'll take care of the rest.

Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society  
2012 Monthly Program Schedule  
**Sin, War, Base-Ball, Shipwrecks, Circus & More**
Are you aware that the mast from the Chicora had a prominent spot in Douglas?

Are you familiar with the Longest Bar in the State of Michigan?
--- yep, Douglas again.

Sinful refreshments will follow.

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**MARCH 14: The Wages of Sin and Other Tales.** 7 p.m., Old School House History Center. A sit-down photo tour with Marsha Kontio at the Old School House. Sinful refreshments served.

**APRIL 11: How the Home Folks Followed the War.** 7 p.m., Old School House History Center. Jim Schmiechen uses images and the little-known "Douglas Dope" wartime newsletter to examine the news that connected the local boys at the "front" with the folks at home during World War Two. War-time ration refreshments served.

**MAY 9: Shipwrecks, Heroes, & Scallywags - an Exhibition.** 6:30 p.m., Old School House History Center. Saugatuck Middle School Sixth Graders tell Lake Michigan stories through words, artwork, and model building. Join in this "exhibition opening" and reception hosted by Wendy Colsen's 6th Grade Language Arts Class." Massive desserts. Note early starting time. The exhibit continues until June Old School House History Center.

**JUNE 13: Michigan’s Titanic: The Mysteries of the Wreck of the Steamship Chicora.** 7:30 p.m., The Boathouse at the Old School House History Center. Join us in the Old School House garden as Kit Lane presents the disaster story and the attempt to find its remains. Shipboard refreshments. The Annual Meeting/Report by the SDHS Board precedes this program at 7 o’clock.

**JULY 11: The Circus Comes to Douglas.** 7:00 p.m., Old School House History Center. Our summer spectacular. Learn about the history of the old-time circus and hear SDHS member Bob Sapita tell how this amazing model circus was built - complete with sound and animation that will leave you spell bound. Circus time refreshments. The Circus will be on display at the OSH until July 23.

The exhibit "Small Towns, Big Picture - the Photography of Bill Simmons" consisting of 31 giant 'blow-up' photos from the huge Simmons collection of the Society's photo library of Saugatuck area life in the 1940s and 1950s runs through March 9. The exhibit is sponsored jointly by the Society and the Saugatuck Center for the Arts and is featured in the Center's gallery.

From the Sunday, July 5, 2009 Holland Sentinel written by Jim Hayden. Bob and Kay Sapita are members of the Society.
You don't have to be a bowler to join the party!

Start building your 5-player teams for an evening of laughter and cheers.

The 2012 Party Time Bowl-a-Rama is focused on FUN!

Prizes will be given for best cheering section, best costumes, player with the most sponsors, player with the most pledges, etc.

Got your team together? Reserve your lane now by REPLYING TO THIS EMAIL or emailing Judi Vanderbeck at hj.vanderbeck@comcast.net

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

• Dawn Stafford & Nicholas Barna, Saugatuck, MI
• Ronald & Lynda Sandberg, Saugatuck, MI
• Scott & Marilyn Hajicek, Douglas, MI & Lakewood, CO

• AUGUST 8: The 'Don't Panic' Shipwreck Picnic. 6:00 p.m., Old School House History Center Garden. Gather at the OSH garden and boathouse for the traditional SDHS summertime good-food picnic - with a garden treasure hunt.
• SEPTEMBER 12: Take Me Out to the Ball Game - and buy me a Hot Dog. 6:00 p.m., Old School House History Center Courtyard. Meet the Douglas Dutcher Team and hear the story of base-ball in Douglas through the years. On the School House courtyard. Beer and Hot Dogs. (Sharon Kelly has already agreed to be a sponsor of this program)
• OCTOBER 10: Strange-But-True and other Cemetery Tales. 7:00 p.m., Old School House History Center. Join Kit, Marsha, and Chris on a photo and story tour through the nearby (and ancient) Taylor and Plummerville Cemeteries. Refreshments to die for.
• NOVEMBER 14: Houses Talking. 7:00 p.m., Old School House History Center. A wine and cheese reception as the backdrop for an instructive view of area building renovation-preservation stories - and meet the 2012 Heritage Award Winners.
• DECEMBER 2: The Society's Annual Jolly Holiday Dinner Party. 6:00 p.m., Saugatuck Center for the Arts. Begin the holiday season with your fellow SDHS members. Good cheer, great food, and a special story presentation.

Pick your program and become a sponsor. Just REPLY to this email.
You can help ensure that the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society continues to "Keep History Alive Here" by becoming a member of the Society's new Legacy Circle. Legacy Circle members have pledged to remember the Society by including the SDHS in their estate plans. You can use the following assets, for example, to make a charitable gift to the Society: a cash gift named in a will, a percentage of your estate, naming the SDHS as the beneficiary of an IRA or insurance policy, gifts of stock, bond and shares of mutual funds, a charitable remainder trust, a piece or collection of local art. Your estate planner can tell you which of the many options are best for you and your family.

You also have the ability to make an 'unrestricted gift' or a 'restricted gift' that can be used only to benefit a specific Society activity. For example, your gift can be restricted for use to fund museum exhibitions, the Tech Center, the Old School House garden, the Society's art collection, etc. If you would like to become a member of the SDHS Legacy Circle or have any questions about the Legacy Circle, please contact Bill Hess at wwh71@comcast.net or call Bill at 269-857-1081. Growing membership in the Legacy Circle will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the Society and allow you to show your support in an everlasting way that will guarantee the Society another 25 years of success and contribution to the quality of life in Saugatuck and Douglas.

The Legacy Circle program was introduced as part the 25th Anniversary "Keep History Alive Here" campaign. We are very pleased to announce that the following members have already joined the Legacy Circle and we send our thanks and appreciation to them: Bill Hess and Mike Mattern, Steve Hutchins, Jon Helmrich and Stephen Mottram, Peg and John Sanford, Ken Carls. Our goal is to reach a membership of 25 Legacy Circle Members this year --- we hope you can help us reach that milestone.
NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVES

The photo above from 1962 shows the abundant snowfall that year. It was taken by Verne Houl, Rector of All Saints’ Church at that time. Cynthia Sorensen, a volunteer in the Society archives, recently donated a number of his photographs as well as the painting below by Verne of the Peterson Mill.

MY FATHER ROBERT MARRIOTT - THE MAN WHO BUILT THE BIG POOL
Part One - by Dale Marriott Williamson

Many articles will conclude with a recommendation to check out an SDHS publications or visit the museum to learn more. Every story will aim to bring our history to life.

If you are a business eager to reach visitors, consider advertising in the Historical Chronicle.

The newspaper's 20,000 free copies will be distributed to visitors to the SDHS Museum, the Old School House, the information booth, area lodging and other key locations frequented by visitors. The publication will be distributed all summer long and will target the affluent and educated visitors who seek out history when they travel.

As a bonus, your message can be typeset in a suitably historical style. You will receive a ready-to-frame copy of your ad as our thanks for supporting this project. All funds from advertising will go to the SDHS operating fund to help keep history alive here.

Consider being the Historical Chronicle's printing sponsor.

By covering the Chronicle's printing, you'll be sharing our history and promoting the richness of Saugatuck-Douglas to a wide audience. The printing sponsor will receive a tasteful "thank you" on the top right hand corner of the front page and a strip across the entire bottom of the front page for any sort of message desired.

For more information about this project, REPLY TO THIS EMAIL or contact Sally Winthers at swinthers@frontier.com

BOARD NEWS & ELECTION NOTICE

The Nominating Committee of the SDHS has prepared a slate for this year's Board elections. Ballots will be sent to all members in March. This year's committee included board members Jon Helmrich, Jim Schmiechen, and Valerie Atkin. Society members Mike Van Meter, Fred Schmidt, and Christa Wise also served on the committee. This year's ballot will also include an amendment to the Society by-laws to
My father, Robert William Marriott, Sr., was in the University of Michigan, when he and his father had a difference of opinion. He didn't like his father remarrying after his mother died. He was very close to his mother, and he was really offended when his father got interested in another woman. They had this unpleasantness, so his father, rather than sending him to college gave him some money to buy a farm in Michigan. That's how it happened that we were there at all. My father bought the property and built the house (Editor's note: called "The House in the Grove") in the grove of trees on the Old Allegan Road, a year and a half before he married my mother in 1913 (I would suppose 1911 or 1912).

We are happy to welcome Anna as our winter-time intern. She is a Kendall College Art History major who is planning a career in museum work - hopefully in Washington D.C.

She will be assisting at the Old School House History Center and the Museum with archiving work as well as several special exhibition and gallery projects. Welcome to Douglas, Anna! She can be reached at vanderjagt.anna@gmail.com
He married my mother, Mildred Stetson, in 1913 and he took his bride over to live there. And they lived many years in that house and ran the farm, and it was a big farm. They had many hundred trees and a huge vineyard, and that's what supported them until my father got this idea about the pool, which came along much later. I was born in 1921.

My father had a lot of trees - apple and cherry, and peach trees, a huge vineyard, and then there was another house on the hill between the river and the farm. The Kalamazoo River was the other side of the farm and then the hill that you could look out toward the farm, and my grandfather built his summer home on that hill. It was a house which was built for ventilation it had windows on both sides of the house and the when the bedroom doors were open there was a breeze that went across, and the rest of the family my grandfather and his other children would come there for their vacation. (Editor's note: called "the House on the Hill", also built in 1911-12).
That was my grandfather's summer place, he was a man of means. Abraham Robert Marriott, President of the Chicago Title and Trust Company, Oak Park, Chicago. He died in May 20, 1931. He was a very beloved and revered man, everybody loved him and everybody called him "Daddy". He made a lot of money. He was well paid for being president of the company.

I went to the Saugatuck grammar school until the fourth grade. I don't recall any of the children I played with. We had a hired man on the farm and he had six boys. He was called "Mart", that's all I remember. He and my father were pretty good friends. They had an outhouse I remember. And the barn yard which was where his house was a little distance from where most of the groves were. There was a house and a barn. We had 2 horse and 3 cows, I think, or maybe 3 horses and 2 cows, and we had a pony. And I wasn't allowed in the barnyard because my mother thought I didn't belonged over there with all those boys, My brother could go over there.

Our Bridges - The End

This series of bridge photos ends with a birds-eye view of Douglas before the 1936 bridge.

In 1913, the highway through Douglas and Saugatuck was part of the West Michigan Pike, which was the first through "highway" along the shoreline of Lake Michigan. The Pike came to life also to attract and meet the needs of tourists flocking to west Michigan in the new-fangled automobile.

The black dots locate the modern day route of the Blue Star Highway. Prior to 1936 the route varied from time to time, but traffic was always on village streets through the center of the town.

A quick study of the birds-eye provides a better understanding of the "where and why" of the Blue Star Highway. It simply follows a nicely curved arc from the end of Wylie Road to meet the new bridge just twenty yards south of the old swing bridge.

At first it was the M-11, becoming M-31 in 1926 and finally named Blue Star in the early 1950s. Actually the Blue Star Memorial Highway is a designation for the entire M-31 highway from the Indiana border to the Straits of Mackinac. The name was established after WWII to honor our veterans.

Next month we will explore the history [and mystery] of a different kind of bridge. Stay tuned.

submitted by jack.sheridan@gmail.com
Welcome from Jack Sheridan, leader of the Society Family History Group. The Group meets on the first and third Thursday of every month at 3:30 in the Old School House. This month, the second meeting is delayed by vacation plans to February 23rd. Please join us to see what we are all about and most importantly, share "lessons learned" about the many tools available for family research.

I'll repeat our offer to members from last month: Send to us information on a person and we will find them for you [if possible] in the U. S. Census.

Each month in this column we tell you about an exciting, family history discovery. A family history discovery is called a EUREKA! moment. This month we have one from Chris Yoder:

In the October Newsletter I wrote about the 1933 Halloween party held at Kemah by Shirle and Billy Springer, children of the Kemah owners during the 1920's and 30's. Both parents died in 1941, and brother Bill during WWII. It seemed I had reached a dead end, when I located a childhood friend of Shirle's who reported that she had died in Texas several years ago, and implied there was no family remaining.

I kept digging, hoping an actual obituary might identify next of kin. Social Security Death Records (available on Ancestry.com - which you can access through SDHS or the Public library in Douglas) helped me identify her date and county of death. I emailed the reference desk at a local public library asking about an obituary, but had no reply. Then I visited the "Genweb" site for the county (by searching the internet for the county and state name and then the word "Genweb"). Much like our SDHS On-line Research page, the county "Genweb" site is an aggregation of collected local history and a gathering place for local researchers. Posting an inquiry led me
(Note: The 1930 census for Manlius Twp, Allegan Co, shows Robert W. Marriott two families away from a Josef Martin, age 39, born in Montreal, Canada.)

I remember the pavilion. There was a movie theater in the pavilion. When I was a kid we'd always sit down front. All the kids got to sit down front with their popcorn. Their parents would sit in back. What a wonderful dance hall that was, those big things that opened up onto the river from the dance floor and the music was just wonderful coming over the river. I was a little girl and I got to dance with other people, oh it was a wonderful place. And there was a veranda, a porch off of the dance floor, we could step out there on about an 8 foot wide veranda, and the boats were parked there and the people would come in from their boats to dance. It was quite a resort town at the time

And there was Mt. Baldhead, when I was a kid we'd climb Mt Baldhead and then they put up a stairway and you could climb up the sand or the stairway. I remember going up on the side on the sand, it was a challenge. The Oval Beech came into being and damaged the business at the pool, because it didn't cost anything to swim at the Oval beech. In Douglas there were a lot of wealthy people who would stay in those houses overlooking the lake. It used to be that it was a real exclusive place - it was people with money who could afford those places.

We lived 5 miles out from town, and in those days it was a big production to come to town. My mother used to drive me into town to play with another girl, but I don't recall any names (Editor's Note: it was Shirle Springer, Dale also remembers June Force). My mother was a little snooty. I couldn't play with just anyone.

to the archives of the Ft. Worth newspaper and for a small fee, I was reading a copy of Shirle's obituary. There was her story:

"Shirle Springer Maines was born in Chicago, died Wednesday, July 9, 2003, age 78, in Fort Worth. During her early years, she was fortunate in acquiring horsemanship skills and dog breeding and exhibition experience. She also enjoyed very extensive travels with her parents, both in America and abroad. She attended Stephens College in Missouri, and later toured both U.S. and international venues as a rodeo performer, specializing in acrobatic trick riding.

"After settling in the Fort Worth area, she spent many years as a program director for the Fort Worth YMCA, where she was one of the early instructors in the "Mom & Tots" program, providing basic swimming instruction for women and their young children ---"

"The obituary goes on to give the name of a surviving daughter! And soon I was in contact with her and she began to share some of the family photos and stories.

William and Alys Springer, Shirle and Billy
We had a house in Oak Park too, when we lost the farm we moved to Oak Park and my father worked for his brother in Oak Park—his brother Thomas Benjamin Marriott. It all happened at once; the whole thing fell apart because we had no money. No one could afford to buy that beautiful fruit my father was raising, he'd polish the apples and put them in special crates and send them to Chicago, but no one could afford to buy them.

"I had not found Saugatuck friends who ever remembered Shirle returning after the death of her parents. Her daughter believes this may have been true, recalling that several times her mother had talked about planning to meet some friends here as a part of a trip back to visit them in New York, but that she never did make that happen. The daughter, however, not only visited Saugatuck in August 1995, but stayed at the Kemah B&B, sleeping in her mother's old room!"

Contact me at: jack.sheridan@gmail.com or 269 857-7144.

Editor's note: The Robert Marriott farm house ("House in the Grove") and the neighboring summer place of his father A. R. Marriott ("House on the Hill"), were located south of Old Allegan Road, on either side of the present 60th street going down to the Kalamazoo River. Both homes, and the barn, have been torn down and there are now housing developments where the groves used to be. contributed by Chris Yoder

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**ABOUT THE SOCIETY**

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

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**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 was titled:

![Image of three individuals walking in the snow]

**A Village Patchwork: Everyday Life in Saugatuck-Douglas**

The Museum is now closed. 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](http://www.sdhistoricalsociety.org)