SEPTEMBER 2013

Again this year, the Society Newsletters are being underwritten by a generous donation from Frances Vorys, a Society Life member.

Dine Around Events:
A Delicious Series of Dinners and Parties
to support the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society
From gourmet dinners in exclusive homes to casual cocktail parties, these culinary events feature great food and great times for a great cause.

A Roan and Black Evening
Saturday, September 28, 2013 | 7 pm
Tickets $125 per person
Hosted by John Newland & Doug McIntosh
3315 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck

First Wedding at the Old School House
September 7, 2013

Congratulations
Meggie & Justin Decker
from the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society

Displayed on the OSH Garage Door Window

Cocktails in the new Blue Star Highway home of John Newland and Doug McIntosh followed by dinner for
12 downstairs in the Roan and Black Gallery.

**Sorry, but this event has SOLD OUT!**

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**2nd Annual Halloween Rooftop Bash**  
**Saturday, October 26, 2013 | 7:30 pm**  
**Tickets $40 per person**  
**Hosted by Judi & Howard Vanderbeck and Janie & Jim Flemming**  
**On the Rooftop, 150 Center Street, Douglas**

High spirits and dinner hot off the grill with Douglas Halloween parade viewing at 10 PM.

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**Comfortable Fall Feast with Steve Teich**  
**Saturday, November 16, 2013 | 6:30 pm**  
**Tickets $85 per person**  
**Hosted by Steve Teich**

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The wedding party disembarked from the trolley and entered the OSH gardens through the pergola.

The OSH gardens were beautifully decorated awaiting the bride and groom along with their guests.

A view of the reception area from inside the boathouse.
178 West Shore Court, Douglas

Cocktails and a hearty dinner for eight in the newly transformed home of designer Steve Teich.

Dollybrook Musical Chairs
Progressive Dinner
Saturday, January 11, 2014 | 6:30 pm
Tickets $75 per person
Hosted by The Keag Family, Dollybrook Family Resort
2076 66th Street, Fennville

Park once and enjoy small plate dining as you walk to each of the nine unique cottages at Dollybrook Resort. The natural beauty and charming, eclectic decor of this property will brighten your January.

To reserve your place in the upcoming events, REPLY to this email or call 269-857-5751 or email info@sdhistoricalsociety.org and we'll be in touch.

Adrian Vincent

Beautiful flowers welcomed guests to the Mt. Baldhead viewing station.

For a video of the wedding, click HERE. Photos of the reception at the Old School House are later in the video.

Janet Schmidt and her sister Ellen Donovan, a Society Life Member along with her husband Richard, were the wedding planners. Another wedding is currently being planned by Janet and Ellen for July 5, 2014 at the Old School House with the rehearsal dinner on the patio at the Pump House Museum.

Photos by Richard Donovan

What You Missed
A few pictures from this year's picnic at the Old School House
Following up on an earlier email to members regarding the recent passing of Society member Adrian Vincent, click HERE for Adrian's Life Story.

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**2013 Society Monthly Programs**

At the Old School House History Center except December

October 9: Tales from the Crypt: Visitors from the Ghostown of Plummerville (Ganges Township) Led by Kit Lane and Marsha Kontio, a virtual tour by the Cemetery Actors Group. Refreshments to Die For.

November 13: Painting: the Town: Landscape, the Artist, and People by Ken Kutzel who brings stories from the Society's art collection. **Sponsored by Arthur Frederick, Button-Petter Gallery**

December 1: Annual Society Holiday Dinner 6:00 pm. At the Saugatuck Center for the Arts. Kick off the Holiday Season. Good cheer, Great Food, Good Friends.

If you would like to sponsor one of the Monthly Programs, please **REPLY** to this email. Sponsorships are $150.

Thanks to Valerie Atkin, Ed Kelly, Sharon Kelly, Marsha Kontio and Renee Zita for providing yummy refreshments for our Monthly Meetings.

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**Mr. Douglas Bench, Esq.**
Happenings at the Old School House History Center

At 1:00 PM on Sunday, September 22, the Great Lakes Chapter of the National Wildlife Federation will hold a fundraiser at the Old School House History Center. Click HERE for more details.

Welcome from Jack Sheridan and Chris Yoder leaders of the Society Family History Group. Our meeting schedule is the first and third Thursday of every month. Upcoming meetings are:

- Thursday September 26 [changed from the usual date]
- Thursday October 3
- Thursday October 17

Please join us to see what we are all about and most importantly, share "lessons learned" about the many tools available for family research.

This month I would like to describe fun steps [OK maybe some are more work than fun] necessary to record and explore your family tree. Many of you are like me when I started discovering fifteen years ago, so I know where you are coming from.

I will get right to the point with the minimum steps you should take.

1) Vow to spend enough time on this project to get comfortable with the basic process. You will reach a point of reasonable competence quite quickly. Giving it a few hours a week is a good start.
2) Learn how to browse the internet. Actually on line research is a wonderful way to learn and gain experience to become comfortable with the internet.
3) Obtain a software program for building family trees

The bench was donated to the Society by Bill Moore and his partner Ken Terlit and refinished by Arnold Shafer.

See below for a higher resolution copy.
4) Gather personal data from relatives and family members. The bare minimum such as name, year of birth/death and relationship is fine. Do not fret if you don't have everything perfect.
5) Talk to relatives who have already done some of the above so that you can copy what they have already discovered and save yourself work. There is plenty to discover – in ten generations you have 4092 grandparents.
6) Record the personal data on your computer using the family tree software program you have installed. Like magic the software prompts for the data and organizes it as accumulated. The learning curve here is short and the results are encouraging.
7) Join the SDHS family history group for "how to and what to do" support. We have subscriptions to many subscriber only web sites. You can build a tree on Ancestry.com. We advise you for free. The only requirement is that you be a SDHS member.
8) Start yelling EUREKA!

If you need a really painless start - record what you know about your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents and send it along for a review by our volunteers. The snail mail address is SDHS Family History Box 617 Douglas, Michigan 49406, or email a copy to either cyoder@tds.net or jack.sheridan@gmail.com. Give us time for an initial assessment.

We will soon be back to you with readily found data and with suggestions on the next steps to take. Further help is always available from the Family History group. Again, the only requirement is membership in the SDHS.

**I must stress that your family history does not have to have any connection to the Saugatuck-Douglas area.**

Still wondering? Questions/comments/advice/needs - contact jack.sheridan@gmail.com 269 857-7144
Chris Yoder cyoder@tds.net 269 857-4327.

submitted by Jack Sheridan

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**Nellie Edgcomb’s Autograph Book**

Among the Edgcomb/Smalley family treasures loaned to the SDHS for scanning by Susan Edgcomb Dickens is the autograph book of her grandfather's sister, Nellie Edgcomb, with bits of wit and wisdom from her friends and acquaintances in the years 1883 to 1889. Such albums were very popular at the time,

"Traveling down the stream of life, in your little bark canoe,
May you have a pleasant trip, with just room enough for two."
-ever your friend, Josie Goshorn
(whose father James served 3 years in the Army during the Mexican War)

"Let us always remember that the best way to convey a
Dorr Eugene Felt was born in Beloit, Rock County, Wisconsin in 1862. At age 15 he left school to work in a local machine shop. Early on, he exhibited an extraordinary mechanical and inventive talent. Five years later he went to Chicago, the big town, where he started work with the Pullman Company. Soon he was a maintenance foreman. Leaving that, he developed persuasive skills by selling sewing machines. But a salesman's career was not to be and in 1884 he returned to his love of machines, taking a position with a machine shop business that used planing machines to cut metal to close tolerances.

During these early jobs, Felt was interested in inventions and had worked on a number of ideas, including a mechanical adding machine. Now the design of the planing machines stimulated his brain for a break through. Dorr's invention of a mechanical "counting machine" - later named the Comptometer - automated arithmetic. Up to this time arithmetic required a certain aptitude as the work was done in the bookkeepers head. It was a massive improvement to the age old process of number crunching!

The lightbulb in his head was turned on in 1884. He built the first prototype using rubber bands and a wooden macaroni box for a case. More prototypes, then patents [46 domestic patents in all] followed. In 1888, Felt got a capital infusion when he teamed with Robert Tarrant, owner of a large machine shop and foundry in Chicago. They formed the Felt & Tarrant Manufacturing Company to make and sell the Comptometer – the counting machine invented and perfected by Dorr Felt. Mr. Felt became a rich man as a lasting good,
Is to help others help themselves."
– Your friend and teacher, Marie A. Newnham

"Nell, as shure as comes your wedding day,
A broom to you I’ll send,
In pleasant weather use the brush,
In storms the other end"- W. S. N.

"Onward through the coming years,
May peace and sunshine be;
And time who brings his thorn to all, Bring only flowers to thee."- Mamie Martel

"Maidens like moths are often caught by glare,
And Mammon wins where Cupid would despair -
Byron"
- D. B. F.

"In the walks of life, We all need an umbrella,
May yours be upheld By an handsome young Fellow"
- Winnie Cummings

"Love many, trust few,
But always paddle your own canoe"
- W. Houtkamp

"Let your life be like a piano,
Grand, Square, Upright"
- Mary Goodrich

"My only books were womens' looks,
And folly all they taught me"- N. S.

"They were gathered on the steamers deck,
a motley gang were they;
They were bound for the "Encampment" aboard the Charles McVea.
But the captain got rattled,
as they came from far and near,
They were bound for "Fair Milwaukee" and Schultz's famous Beer"- H.S., Sep. 1889
In 1891, Dorr married Agnes McNulty and they were blessed with four daughters born in the next ten years. In 1919 as retirement approached, they fell in love with this area and acquired several hundred acres of wooded and rolling dunes along Lake Michigan between Holland and Saugatuck. They named the estate "Shore Acres Farm."

Starting in 1925, construction of the "Big House" took three years. Dorr made it a gift for his beloved wife, Agnes. The home would be large enough to accommodate his married daughters and their families. It took three years to construct the 12,000 square foot mansion which consists of 25 rooms, including a third-floor ballroom. Sadly, Agnes died in the summer of 1928, six weeks after the family moved in, and Dorr died a year and a half later in 1930.

The family kept the home until 1949, but with the advent of more sophisticated calculators, the business income declined. The family sold the comptometer business to Victor Electronics, and the Felt descendants decided to sell Shore Acres Farm.

The buyer was the St. Augustine Seminary. The Seminary had a Catholic prep school for young men. About 1965, outgrowing the large carriage house, which they used for classrooms, and the mansion which they used for housing, the Seminary built a school building to the west of the mansion. The mansion was used as a cloister by nuns of the order.

In the late 1970s, the State of Michigan purchased the property and converted the school building to a minimum security prison. The State owned the property until the early 1990s. The mansion was used in part during the years of State ownership as offices for the State Police. At that time the prison was torn down and Laketown Township bought the mansion and land around it for one dollar, with the stipulation that the mansion be used for the public benefit.

For the last fifteen years volunteers from the area communities have been restoring the mansion and grounds to their 1920's splendor. Today the mansion is open on a limited basis for visits and is available for special events. For details visit the web site http://www.feltmansion.org

Next month we listen in on story telling at a small historical
Welcome New Members

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

- Stephen Clark - St. Louis, MO
- Nancy Garrity & Mary Szpor - Chicago, IL & Douglas, MI
- Lenore M. Weber - Douglas, MI
- William & Mary Leber - Douglas, MI
- Carl & Virginia Ojala - Douglas, MI
- John & Judy Provancher - Portage, MI

Garden Happenings

Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!
Robert Louis Stevenson

Fall is right around the corner, but what a summer it has been. Although the summer blooms are finished and the peaches have been picked, our garden is still
definitely worth writing towards the back of the book:

"Way back here and out of sight,
I scribble my name with all my might."
Marion Edgcomb, June 17, 1920

In an early newsletter, we presented some of the writings from the autograph book of Nellie's younger friend Winifred Cummings Walker (1873-1960) whose wit is seen above. Winifred's book can be seen on-line by clicking HERE.
submitted by Chris Yoder

What's Happening at the Archives

Architectural blueprint of the Douglas Basket Factory
Click on the blueprint for a higher resolution copy.

It's been a busy summer here in the archives office, training a new summer intern, accepting new items, and recording previous gifts. Our newly appointed Acquisition Committee has already met twice and hope to continue meeting on a regular basis. The work of the Acquisition Committee is to review the items that are donated to the Society to see whether or not they fall in line with the mission statement and purpose of the Society which states: "The Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society will collect, preserve, and exhibit the rich historical and cultural heritage of Saugatuck, Douglas, Saugatuck Township and vicinity --- the collection represents a diverse heritage and will be accessible to all." All the items accepted into our collection should meet the above criteria. Or the easy question is: Does this item help tell the story of who
amazing with its beautiful fall blooming perennials. They added such brilliant color to the wedding reception that was recently held at the Old School House. Many thanks to Janet Schmidt and her sister Ellen Donovan for all of their hard work. They turned the already beautiful garden into a picture right out of a magazine. It was truly a creative use for our garden and, we are quite sure, just the beginning of many more exciting events to be held there.

Speaking of peaches, we had a bumper crop! They not only looked good - they were good. We hope everyone had a chance to taste our first crop. Our little Garden Gnome reports that a delicious peach cobbler was even made from them. Thanks to Steve Hutchins and Joan Donaldson for their advice and care of our trees.

We hope everyone has had a chance to view the Architectural Station. It is a perfect station to dedicate to our very own Jim Schmeichen. He and Kristi Mueller worked really hard on getting it just right. Thanks to both of you. Now we just need to add some plants --- next year!

The committee has decided not to add any new daffodil bulbs this fall. We want to make sure not to put the cart before the horse. Stations are still being developed and we need to install other plant material before we install the bulbs. No worries though, our Daffodil Trail will grow next fall.

**Volunteer Opportunities:** Although our season is winding down, volunteers are still needed to keep our garden weed free. It is an endless job, but one that is so important. Thanks to all who have been helping out. Since we are on the topic of volunteers, our Master Gardener, Mike Economos, would like to solicit help at the Museum next year. There is a ton of work to do, way too much for one person. Anyone interested please contact Mike at mikeeconomos@gmail.com

Also we need someone who is quick on the keyboard. We are ordering name plaques for our plants and need someone to type and attach the names to the plaque. Please contact Ruth Johnson if you can help us out. Please and thanks!

Please continue to enjoy our gardens. The fall season offers such beauty.

See you next month, The Garden Committee
ABOUT THE SOCIETY

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

- Individual: $30
- Household: $50
- Premium: $250
- Corporate: $500
- Life: $1,000
- Senior (65+): $20
- Senior Household: $35
- Student: $5

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

HISTORY MUSEUM AND HISTORY 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 2013 exhibit is titled:

dunelands
footprints
on the sand

2013 EXHIBITION
SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS
History Museum
This year's all-new exhibition at the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society Museum, offers a multifaceted look at the Kalamazoo River duneland and its archeological, historical, environmental, social and recreational significance, in contrasting tales of change and permanence. The Museum occupies the historic Saugatuck Pump House at 735 Park Street, in a scenic garden setting along the west shore of the Kalamazoo River at Mt. Baldhead Park, a short walk north from the Saugatuck Chain Ferry landing. Admission and nearby parking are free.

Titled "Dunelands: Footprints on the Sand", the exhibition will celebrate our piece of the world's largest freshwater dunes system in the world, according to Museum Curator Dr. James Schmiechen. "It's a marvelous collaboration of restless beaches, rolling forests and ravines, hidden streams, ponds and marshland habitats," he says. "This exhibition tells of how they came to be, how human activity has changed them and how people have changed in response to them, while giving special attention to historic sites scattered across the area and how history has set the stage for today's vibrant local community."

Researched and written by Schmiechen, and designed by Society volunteers Judy Hillman and Sally Winthers, the exhibition pulls together an array of photographs, artifacts and stories, set before a sweeping 50 x 10ft. mural dunescape captured by local photographer James Cook, intended to visually transport the viewer outdoors.

Informative wall panels weave text and graphics together to view the dunes from three different perspectives: The Preservationist's Notebook surveys 12 nearby "critical dune" sites with an eye toward "best use" protection of the natural environment while allowing appropriate public access; The Photographer's Notebook presents aerial views of local shoreline geography by Chicago photographer Bill Werme, documenting changes resulting from both natural and human causes; The Archeologist & Historian's Notebook, recalls the late 1800s "lumber rush" that disregarded nature, creating millionaires but sentencing the village of Singapore to its ultimate burial by shifting dunes.

Another series of wall panels presents a compilation of photos taken along dune trails, accompanied by hiker quotes revealing personal impressions and expressing thoughts inspired by their duneland experiences.

Centerpiece of the exhibition is a simulated "Dunelands Trail", marked by trail-stop signposts showing and describing a variety of sites encountered on an imagined hike through the dunes, including: Dune Rides; Goshorn Lake & Dune; New Harbor & Basin; Old Harbor & Lighthouse; Fishtown; Oxbo Art School & Lagoon; Pier Cove; The Oval; Mt. Baldhead; and Lake Shore Chapel.

Hovering above it all is "Beachcomber's Folly" a whimsical-while-thought-provoking hanging sculpture by Saugatuck artist Ted Reyda. The colorful composition was meticulously assembled from thousands of items that were washed up on local beaches and collected by Reyda over more than 20 years. Below, Reyda transforms other types of manmade flotsam into spherical standing artworks. In their own playful way, all serve to raise serious questions about human carelessness regarding our environment and disregard for protecting nature's gifts. Museum guests will find themselves silently drawn to interact with Reyda's art by identifying its components . . .sometimes obvious, sometimes not.

Augmenting the Historical Society's exhibits is a video display created by the Saugatuck High School students of art teacher Christa Wise, inspired by the work of British sculptor Andy Goldsworthy, known for combining natural materials such as twigs, stone, thorns, mud and pinecones into temporary in-situ constructions that weather the elements and return to nature.

After watching "Rivers and Tides", a 2001 documentary featuring Goldsworthy at work, the class set out to Oval Beach and the dunes to create site-specific sculpture and land-art using whatever they found. Their short video, in the style of "Rivers and Tides", documents the students' efforts to follow in Goldsworthy's footsteps, in the process discovering (in the words of one student) "how difficult it is to even begin to approach the quality of his work".
The Museum is open to the public daily from noon to 4 pm through Labor Day, then on weekends from noon to 4 pm in September and October. Click HERE to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House History Center and Lifeboat Display at 130 Center Street in Douglas is open to visitors Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 4 pm until August 17.

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
Dear Historical Society:

I have lived in downtown Saugus for many yrs. but was retired because my condition no longer allowed me to perform my services. I was discarded behind the stores with others. A Mr. Bill Moore who worked at one of the shops took me home and I lived in his garage for 15 yrs. He is now selling his home and gave me to a friend of his. He said I needed "some work" a face lift, with this he thought I could get my job back at the old school house. He said Mr. Schmichom was the caretaker for the society and liked all things. I look good now and knew I can do my job. I would like to return and serve the community of Saugus Michigan; if you want me. If you do not be said he would gladly take me back; just let him know he live in Saugus. I will be in front of the shed.

Sincerely,

Mr. Douglas Bench Esq.