AUGUST 2014

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

New Event!

Upcoming 2014 Monthly Programs and Tuesday Talks

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

- September 10, Country Life: The Felt Estate on the Midwest Riviera with Patty Meyer - Sponsored by Star of Saugatuck Boat Cruises, Bruce & Marilyn Starring
- October 8, Tales from the Cemeteries with Kit Lane and Marsha Kontio
- November 12, Michigan's Hottest Town Revisited with Mike Sweeney
- December 14, Holiday Party at the SCA

TUESDAY TALKS

- August 26, Gangster Stories: Fact or Fiction - Bring Your Story with Jim Schmiechen, Kit Lane and the Audience - Sponsored by Val Atkin & Osman Flowers and Firs

Saturday, September 20 at 7:00 PM
Cocktails at the Historic Riley-Slack-Ellis House
(located on Heirloom Lane in Douglas)
$50 per person

This is a unique opportunity to get a glimpse inside the well-preserved Riley-Slack-Ellis House, built ca. 1880 by carpenter and joiner Thomas A. Riley*.

Join hosts Michigan Supreme Court Justice
Bridget Mary McCormack and her husband Steven Croley for a cocktail party in their historic home. $50 per person

*Riley was killed in the Civil War, and his widow, Fidelia, continued to live in the house after she married another Civil War veteran, Anthony Slack. Subsequently, their daughter, married to Claude Ellis, a lake ship's captain, continued to occupy the house, thus keeping it in the same family for generations.

To reserve your ticket, REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch.

Saturday, October 4 at 6:00 PM
An evening at DollyBrook Resort
$50 per person

DollyBrook Resort is a 2011 Heritage Preservation Award winner and a must see for everyone. Park once and stroll the nine cottages at your own pace. Each cottage will serve cocktails and one of the following: Appetizers, Soups, Salads, or Dessert.

Mix and mingle with friends and enjoy each cottage's fabulously unique decor featuring local artifacts and antiques. The cottages will be hosted by different members of the Society doing the cooking and serving up the cocktails. Make this event a "must do" on your list of fall activities.

To reserve your ticket, REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch.

20th Anniversary of the 1994 Museum Exhibit

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Society's first Exhibition at the Pump House Museum. If you have pictures of the exhibits or stories to share about the Exhibition, please REPLY to this email and we will include them in next month's newsletter

Garden Happenings

"To forget how to dig in the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves." --- Mahatma
Saturday, October 25 - 7:30 PM
Halloween Bash
at the Old School House
$50 per person

The annual Halloween party has become a favorite for many members and friends of the Society. This year's party will be hosted by Sharon Kelly, Janie & Jim Flemming, Ken Carls and Howard & Judi Vanderbeck. Don your costume (or not) and come to the Old School House for drinks and dinner preceding the fantastic Douglas Halloween Parade.

If you would like to reserve your spot for one of these upcoming Dine Around events, REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch.

Gandhi

The annual picnic was a perfect time to showcase the accomplishments in our garden. We hope everyone enjoyed our new additions. Our Peach Orchard will now explain a little about our history in agriculture through our fence detail. Our slate boards will soon inform visitors about schoolyard games of the past, and FINALLY our appreciation for all Jim Schmeichen has done for our Society is noted on the Architectural Station. Many, many, many thanks to all who helped.

New slate boards at the Old School House Back-In-Time Garden

John Migas is always being asked to "do this and do that" and he always pulls through with amazing work. Kristi Mueller and Jim continue to amaze us with their creativity, and our fence would never have happened without the help of Kathy Van Tubbergen.
Have you made your donation to ArtsAlive! on behalf of the Historical Society

The Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society is again participating in the ArtsAlive! Voting Competition. Voting ends on September 2. Thanks to community support, we finished in second place the past two years and want to finish first this year.

These crucial funds helped underwrite the amazing new Pump House Museum Exhibit, the Old School House and its Gallery, the Boathouse and Back-In-Time Garden. Not to mention Monthly Meetings and Tuesday Talks. Keep History Alive Here!

The Keep Your ArtsAlive! is an arts and cultural competition of the Allegan County Community Foundation. It was created to engage and encourage our community to support the rich arts and cultural offerings we have in Allegan County. Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society is one of 17 organizations competing this year. The organizations compete to see who can receive the most votes.

Each vote costs one dollar. 100% of each voting dollar comes back to us at the end of the competition. Please vote for the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society. Just go to www.artsaliveallegancounty.org to vote online,

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Artist Kathy Van Tubbergen stencil painting the Peach Orchard fence.

One more huge thanks to Dottie Lyon, Richard Lucier and all who helped in cleaning up the fence area. We will now be able to install perennials this fall. Speaking of perennials, nice job, Lee Ver Schure, on your perennials gardens. You are truly an artist!

The Landscape Committee would like to welcome and thank Mark Neidlinger for joining our group. He will be a great addition to an already amazing group of artists.

Our first ever Root Camp finished with a bang. Our last session was full of butter churning, honey tasting, water filtering fun! We are so thankful to our junior counselors, sponsors and the Historical Society for backing us on this new adventure. Just wait 'til next year!
Welcome from Jack Sheridan and Chris Yoder, leaders of the Society Family History Group. The Group's regular meeting schedule is the first and third Thursday of every month. Upcoming meetings are:

Thursday, August 21
Thursday, September 4

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

Browsing through my family tree last week I was pleased with what I have amassed in fifteen years. My starting point had been passed down from my parents both gone from this world. There were many photos but little in hard facts. The Sheridans were pretty much unknown before Aaron Sheridan, my great grandfather who was born in upstate New York in 1834. My mother was an Oberlin who had a family lore document telling of Oberlins coming to Pennsylvania about 1730 but without solid information. My grandmother Sarah was an Unwin who came from England in 1882 at the age of four. Her father was a skilled steel worker who was hired in England to come to the USA. He was a foreman making steel rails in a Chicago mill. Sarah married George Henry Sheridan who in 1909 became the Saugatuck lighthouse keeper. His father Aaron and mother Julia Moore were lighthouse keepers on South Manitou Island in the 1860s.

The tree contains 5893 people, a few lines go back to the 1400s, 707 photos, and all but a few

Root Camp kids in Francis (Gallinipper) life boat at History Center life saving shipwreck exhibit.

Until next month,
The Landscape and **Root Camp** Committees

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**Bill Lankton**

In the last issue of this newsletter we asked for information about Bill Lankton, the builder of the Swift Villa model.
of my thirty two great great grandparents. I am thoroughly British-Irish with a dash of German from my mother. For ease of research I am lucky to have so many ancestors who came to this country early on. It has been fun and in the process, I have learned so much about the history of our wonderful country.

Best of all, I have gained a real sense of knowing where I came from.

Try it – and you will be rewarded!

**Remember, your family history does not have to have any connection to the Saugatuck-Douglas area!!!**

Not sure how to get going? Let us provide a helpful jump start by recording what you know about your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents and send it along for a review by Chris Yoder or myself. 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.

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

Mayflower ancestor, Revolutionary War vet, great grandparents? Still wondering? Questions/comments/advice/needs - contact jack.sheridan@gmail.com 269 857-7144 Chris Yoder cyoder@tds.net 269 857-4327.

*This news letter column is produced by Jack Sheridan*

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The following information was sent in by his wife, Lynn. Bill Lankton (the Rev. G. William Lankton) was born in Detroit, MI on January 20, 1925. He had a talent for art and his high school years were spent at Cass Tech in Detroit where he majored in art.

After graduation in 1943, he immediately joined the Army Air Corp and served during WWII until the end of the war. In 1947 he entered the College of Wooster in Wooster, OH and majored in history.

After graduation in 1951, he married Lynn Wunder, entered McCormick Seminary in Chicago and was ordained in 1954.

*Click HERE for a Memoriam to Bill Lankton prepared by the McCormick Theological Seminary*

Bill had always been interested in camping. While in high school and college, he attended many camps sponsored by the Presbyterian Church as well as working at the camps.

After his first year of Seminary, he and his wife Lynn volunteered to be summer recreation
The Big Pavilion - Death By Fire

Friday morning, May 6, 1960, a slow breeze out of the south, began turning to the southwest. The Big Pavilion's 51st season opening loomed three weeks away. Manager Jack Repp was out to tell the Village maintenance boss Harry Newnham to turn on the water and to negotiate the summer advertising rates with The Commercial Record. From his Chicago office, owner Herb Shutter ordered red paint for the summer paint job. Somewhere among the thousands of light sockets and miles of 1909 wiring, a malignant short sparked, perhaps . . .

The Big Pavilion began a trip down death row. In the Hotel Saugatuck next door, Viola Fox was tallying last night's receipts. The phone rang. From across the river, the caller reported smoke coming from the Pavilion. Vi punched an in-house direct line alarm button to the Village fire hall. Minutes later, as chief Bill Wilson smashed through the Dock Bar door, it was already too late. Flames churned skyward and inky smoke boiled from the eaves of the towering dockside wall.

The beloved barn was a funeral pyre. The only doubt was how much of Saugatuck would survive. In the end, a lucky wind swept blast furnace heat and burning embers westward, out leaders for the Synods of Wyoming and Idaho. After graduation from Seminary, Bill was called by the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church to be Minister of the Mountainview, Wyoming Presbyterian Church and to develop preaching points in southwestern Wyoming and northern Utah. While there, he also directed summer camps for the Synod.

In 1957 he was invited to become the minister of the Presbyterian Church in Holly, Michigan. While there he directed many summer camps for the Synod of Michigan and started "Wilderness Camping" for Senior Highs, leading trail hikes on Isle Royal and canoe trips on the Tahquamenon River in upper Michigan.

In 1966, the Chicago Presbytery invited him to be on their professional staff as part of their Christian Education Department as well as Director of their camp in Saugatuck, MI. The camp was a three season camp until the 1970's when Glen Graham of Shorewood raised money to build five winterized cabins and Bill directed winter weekend groups as well as groups in spring, summer and fall.

Bill was very aware of the fragile dunes and always emphasized the need to care for them. He was instrumental in planting dune grass and teaching campers to respect and care for the land.

CAMP HISTORY

The camp was started in 1899 by a Methodist minister, the Rev. George Grey. It was a place where intercity mothers and children could come for a rest from the heat of the city as well as a place where families could rent cabins. The model of Swift Villa, the first dining hall &
over the river and ten fire departments, hoses streaming river water, were able to contain the conflagration and save the town.

So in mere hours, a Saugatuck legend, "the brightest spot on the Great Lakes" was distilled to a heap of black ruble. The big red dance hall - her birth, life and death were bigger than life – had passed on. A brilliant burst of light and excitement, followed by the wonder of it all . . .

Hotel “Swift Villa” at Camp Grey, Saugatuck, MI

In 1913, the Methodists sold the camp to the Presbyterians. Bill had the longest record in the camp's history as Director - from 1966 until his retirement in 1990.

There were three sections to the camp. Camp Grey bordering the Oval beach, Westminster Woods in the center section and Camp Kema bordering Shorewood. Three different programs ran simultaneously.

A new dining hall and kitchen was built in 1966. Food was taken to the other two areas in thermal units and served by camp staff. The summer staff usually numbered between 25 and 30 people. Most staff were college age. Bill's son Mark was 13 when the family came to the camp in June 1966. Mark became resident manager and lived in Tanglewood cabin from 1974 to 1994. He also had the record of being the person who served the camp the longest as resident manager. Mark designed and built the Camp Grey sign with help from Lee Voigt that the

Welcome New Members

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

Ed & Barb Welk, Fennville, MI
Robert & Carol Leneway, South Haven, MI & Maricopa, AZ

Eureka! Local Norwegian Civil War Veteran Found on History

This newsletter column is written by Jack Sheridan.
Website
by Jan Huttenstine

The clock struck 1:00 am early one morning last April, as I stumbled sleepily toward the laptop computer in our tiny home office in St. Joseph, MI. After months of countless hours in library archives and on ancestry.com, my husband Gary and I were left with basic questions unanswered about his Norwegian immigrant great-grandfather, John F. Baker. The family said he was born in Norway in the 1840s and that he died in Douglas, MI in 1918. He married and raised nine children, yet no family member knew about his Norwegian family, the town of his birth, or his immigration information. There was no obituary, no personal letter, not one scrap of detail to shed light on his story. His Civil War cemetery stone at Fennville Cemetery matched his pension records --- 8th Illinois Infantry, Company B. His trades were blacksmith, carriage trimmer, and teamster in a lumber yard—all good data, but we still needed a link to his family to connect the events of his life into a cohesive story. Early that morning last April we found it.

There it was - John F. Baker's obituary on the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society website! Born in Bergen, Norway in 1843, age 21 at immigration, enlistment in the Civil War at Chicago, Cook County IL, fought in the battles of Spanish Fort and Fort Blakely, honorable discharge, and locations of family members. A week later, we found that someone had scanned the entire 1916 Farm Journal Directory of Allegan County. Bingo! Not only was John Baker in Douglas on Fremont Street two years before he died, many other family members were located. Thank you, Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society, and the members who create and maintain such a wonderful history website. Hats off to your organization! Keep up the good work!

Bill died at his son, Mark's home in Port Orford, OR on May 2, 2014. Presbyterian Camp was a place that Bill could use his many talents - a "dream job" for him. He loved the concept of using all available resources to accomplish a task and cherished helping people to value the natural world.

The camp was sold for development in the spring of 2014, a very sad day for many campers and the Lankton family. Bill died recently and his ashes were scattered by his family on the trails to and from Mount Baldy, as well as at the summit. Bill led many hikes along those trails during his years as camp director.

You Never Know Where You Will Find a Historical Society Photo
John Baker's story is still incomplete. He appears to have entered Allegan County, Michigan around the time of the 1871 Chicago Fire. Although he originated in Norway and spent time in Illinois, he married Ida Josephine Barker in Heath, Allegan County in 1877. She was the thirteenth of fourteen children born to Benjamin Willis and Mary Coe Barker. They were pioneers from NY and CT who settled in Manlius Twp. in the early 1850s. Two of Ida Josephine's aunts married and moved to Allegan County in 1853 - Mary Jane Barker married Elam Fenn, founder of Fennville, and Lydia Barker married Hollister Marsh, who owned the Exchange Hotel in Allegan before establishing businesses in Richmond, and later, a large farm in Manlius near Willis and Mary Barker.

After the lumber business waned, John and Josephine Baker moved to Ganges Twp. where they lived and worked on the Marion Loomis farm. Marion was a son of Levi and Sally Loomis, and like John Baker, was a Civil War veteran. Their youngest children attended Loomis School. When the Loomis farm’s peach trees suffered blight and Marion Loomis died, John himself was also aging. He and Josephine moved to Douglas, where John died in 1918 while living on Water St. overlooking the bay. He likely found it peaceful there and not too different from his home in Bergen, Norway.

In March of this year, I received a phone call and subsequent email from Salvatore Basile. He was in the process of completing a book on the history of air conditioning, to be published by Fordham University Press. While searching for illustrations, he came across the photo of the Airdome Theatre on the Society's website, wanted to include it in the book.

Saugatuck's Airdome Theatre ca 1912 on Water Street north of the Pavilion

Thanks to Jack Sheridan, a copy of the requested photo was sent to the author. In accordance with Society's publication policy, we were reimbursed and also requested a copy of the book when it was published.

Never expecting to hear from the author again, much to my surprise, an autographed copy and lovely thank you note arrived in the mail in the last week.

If you are interested in some bedtime reading on the history of air conditioning, REPLY to this email and I will loan you the Society's copy.

submitted by Fred Schmidt
The John F. Baker Family - circa 1904, Ganges Twp.

Seated: (L to R) Lottie (Fred King), John F. Baker, John F. Baker II (Inga Jorgensen), Ida Josephine Baker (nee Barker), Bessie (Fred Young).

Standing: Blanche (George Randers), Florence (Rufus Monique), Maggie (Iwick - Beagle), Phoebe Anna (Orrin Hadaway), George (Leah Sternaman), and Ida Virginia (Sam Beagle).

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A Fun Society Summer Picnic
Thanks to the Many Volunteers

Blue Coast Trio performing in the Old School House Garden during the Society's summer picnic.

A big part of Society membership is all about having fun. On Wednesday, August 13, on a beautiful night in the gorgeous Back-in-Time Garden at the Old School House, we celebrated Summer with our annual Member Picnic & Potluck. Good company, great food and terrific live music from the Blue Coast Trio. Thanks, Mark Schrock and the boys! Kudos to the hard working volunteers who made it all possible . . . Ed Kelly, Leslie Thompson, Fran Van Howe, Elliott Sturm, Judi Vanderbeck, Steve Hutchins, Kathy Klage, Renee Zita, Vic Bella, Bill & Nancy Wood, Lonnie & Jolene Jackson, Cynthia Sorensen and all those who helped. submitted

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Mildred & Jeanette's Party June 6, 1912
created by Chris Yoder

Thanks to John Fox for sharing this photo on the "You know you're from Saugatuck when . . ." FACEBOOK site, AND with the SDHS.

"One from the vault . . . Back of pic is written by hand . . . Mildred & Jeanette's Party June 6, 1912. Beginning at left they are- Lois Bennett, Hope Shriver, Dorothy Field, Elita Bird, Rabecca Puley, Margaret Lossmieler, Pauline Kreager, Dorothy Miller, Beatrice Brown, Jeanette W., Dorothy Pfaff, Natalie Reed, Florence Brittaine, Edith Hayes, Mildred Cummings, Hellen Perry, Aldean Pear. - My guess is most names lost and forgotten.- John Fox"

Mildred Cummings (daughter of George Cummings, who in 1914 was to become Captain of the South American passenger boat) and her cousin Jeanette Walker (daughter of the town doctor whose memorial is in the Saugatuck Village Square) were the hostesses for this 1912 party of young Saugatuck ladies. Mildred's mother had died the previous year and in 1913 her father would marry again. As of 1934, Mildred worked for the Board of Education in Detroit. Jeanette was to grow up to marry Dr. Arnold Barr.

Many of these young ladies moved away and lived elsewhere in later life, but some returned to be buried at home in the Riverside Cemetery, including: Lois Bennett Monroe (1904- 1992- foster sister of Johnson Fox); Jeanette Walker Barr (1902-1979); Hope Shriver Dickson (1902-1979); Elita Bird Graves (1897-1991); Beatrice Brown
by Sharon Kelly

Finch (1907-2005); and Edith Hayes (1899-1967).

In later years . . .

Jeanette Walker

Elita Bird

Beatrice Brown

What You Missed!

Photos from Jim Schmiechen's Car Talk
ABOUT THE SOCIETY

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

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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

**Historical Society Museum Exhibit Celebrates Area's Duneland Treasure**

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 is open daily from noon to 4 pm through Labor Day and then noon to 4 pm on weekends through the end of October.

Titled "Dunelands: Footprints on the Sand", the exhibition celebrates 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
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; Oxbow 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".

--- Award-Winning Books Highlighted ---

Continuing the Society's tradition of offering books created to accompany exhibits past and present, the Museum's south gallery gift shop this year highlights two of its most popular award winners -- The Village Table: A Delicious History of Food in the Saugatuck-Douglas Area; and Off The Record...the unpublished photographs of Bill Simmons.

*The Village Table*, authored by Society volunteers Kit Lane and Stacy Honson with graphic design by Sally Winthers, won a 2012 Leadership In History Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). It celebrates the Saugatuck-Douglas area by exploring its food: what the settlers found, what was fished, what was gathered and grown, what each wave of newcomers brought, what the restaurants served to visitors, and what we eat today. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of the food scene and concludes with a selection of menus and recipes that favor locally-available ingredients.
Cues for the recipes came from history, and some less-palatable historical dishes, like the infamously dry Johnnycake (a cornmeal flatbread), are served up with a modern twist such as delicious cornbread French toast. Local restaurants and businesses contributed the recipes in chapter seven “On the Menu.” The final chapter “Cooking Local” presents a wide range of family favorites from Historical Society members. This 144-page book, richly illustrated in color with lay-flat binding, also features separate historical and culinary indexes.

*Off The Record*, written by James Schmiechen with help from Society volunteers Kit Lane and Jack Sheridan, and designed by Ken Carls, received a Historical Society of Michigan Award of Merit in 2001. It offers a fascinating pictorial history of Saugatuck in the 40s and 50s seen through the eyes and camera of an insatiable photographer whose skills ran the gamut from art photography to photojournalism. Simmons (1891-1966), worked for The Chicago Evening Post and Time-Life, Inc., later was editor of The Commercial Record for 10 years in mid-century. He left a collection of some 3000 unpublished photos, mostly negatives, shot in and around Saugatuck from 1941 to 1961.

SDHS received the long-lost collection in 1998, and discovered that its images witness the changing geography of the waterfront and village streetscape while connecting us with life in the mid-1900s in an unusual way. Unlike most photographers, Simmons was not interested in getting people to pose, preferring to catch them off-guard, being themselves, in conversation, at play, absorbed in thought or responding to events around them. As a result, his work shows how ordinary people interacted with each other, the village they lived in and the land they lived on.

The 157 photos selected for this book represent many hours of research and writing by many SDHS volunteers, as well as the townspeople they interviewed, plus extensive efforts in printing old negatives, digitizing photos, and pulling it all together into book form.

--- Interactive Map Tells Stories ---

The south gallery also features the Society's popular "SuperMap" -- a 6-foot high, 12-foot wide illustrated color wall map of the Saugatuck-Douglas area with an interactive computer display to provide a virtual tour through these historic villages, highlighting significant people, places and events of both past and present. Map artwork, created by Holland artist-cartographer Mark Cook based on Historical Society research, recalls the entertaining illustration/poster maps of the 1940-50 era, combining street layouts with stylized sketches and notes.

The map offers Museum visitors an engaging way to soak up the story of the Saugatuck-Douglas area. As many as 70 map-highlighted references are keyed by number to let visitors select and learn about sites of interest by calling up information, narratives and images using several video/interactive touch-screen terminals near the map. The screens also offer topical "interactive programs" such as History of Hotels/Boarding Houses; History of Boatbuilding and Boat Builders; Buildings and Architecture; Artists and Painting; Local Biographies; History of Saugatuck-
Douglas Schools; 13 Tales of the Villages and A Video History of Saugatuck and Douglas.

In addition, the terminals allow public access to the Historical Society's digitized archives of historical photos, pages of *The Commercial Record* dating back to 1868, the Saugatuck-Douglas Building Survey and more.

*Article and photos submitted by John Peters. Click on any photo for a higher resolution copy.*

The Museum is open daily from noon to 4 pm through Labor then on weekends in September and October from noon to 4 pm. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House History Center and Lifeboat Display, located at 130 Center Street in Douglas, is open Thursday through Sunday from 11 AM to 4 PM. For group tours or to schedule another period, please contact Steve Hutchins at 616-801-3735 or by email at hutch343@frontier.com

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)

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