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

Friday, August 22 at 6:00 PM
Lobsters & More on the Lovely Lakeshore
$100 per person

This summer feast will be hosted by Jan and Dave Ryder at their fabulous home (completed 4 years ago) just off Lakeshore Drive.

The evening will start with appetizers and drinks on the pool deck overlooking the lake. Adventurous gamblers can walk down the 20 steps to the beach and bet on the lobster races.

Just click on the poster to enter the web site for the Society's 2004 Museum Exhibit. It will
Stacy Honson and her team will serve up a shellfish boil of lobster, shrimp and more. (For those with shellfish allergies, we've got you covered with beer-butt chickens hot off the grill.)

As the sun sets over the lake, enjoy after dinner drinks with pies baked especially for this occasion by Jan at Earl's Farm.

This will be the event of the summer and there are only 48 seats for sale. Dress casual. $100 per person. See you at the lake!

This event will sell out quickly. To reserve your spot at the table, REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch.

Second Wedding Held at the Old School House

After ringing the Old School House bell, newlyweds Beth Barrows Bryant and Noah Bryant leave the front door of the Old School House to join 140 friends and family for a reception under the tents on the Old School House front lawn.
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

Newlyweds cut the cake in front of the Francis Lifeboat at the Old School House.

(Click on either image for a higher resolution copy)
Permission for use of the pictures provided by the Mr. & Mrs. Noah Bryant and the photographer, Alicia Kielb of Alicia Matthew Photography

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**Upcoming 2014 Monthly Programs and Tuesday Talks**

**MONTHLY PROGRAMS**

1. August 13, Picnic + Gallinipper Talk + Beer with Jim Schmiechen  **Sponsored by Lonnie Hannaford & Jolene Jackson**
2. September 10, Country Life: The Felt Estate on the Midwest Riviera with Patty Meyer  **Sponsored by Star of Saugatuck Boat Cruises, Bruce & Marilyn Starring**
3. October 8, Tales from the Cemeteries with Kit Lane and Marsha Kontio
4. November 12, Michigan's Hottest Town Revised with Mike Sweeney
5. December 14, Holiday Party at the SCA

**TUESDAY TALKS**
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.

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 and Janie Flemming. 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,

- **July 29, Birds of the Dunelands** with Rick Brigham [Sponsored by Sharon Kelly]
- **August 5, Last Stop Saugatuck - The History of the West Michigan's Interurban Train** with Norm Krentel [Sponsored by Judy Oberholtzer]
- **August 12, Arriving In Style: The Automobile as Saugatuck & Douglas History** with Jim Schmiechen [Sponsored by Bill Hess & Mike Mattern]
- **August 19, What Did You Do Last Summer?** with Ruth Johnson, Kids Summer Camp Review [Sponsored by Renee Zita & Ed Ryan]
- **August 26, Gangster Stories: Fact or Fiction - Bring Your Story** with Jim Schmiechen, Kit Lane and the Audience [Sponsored by Val Atkin & Osmond Flowers and Firs]

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**Garden Happenings**

"The earth laughs in flowers"
--- Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is a beautiful summer for our gardens. With the rain and cooler temperatures, it looks like a rainforest when you walk through them --- lush and full of blooms!

Our gardens have been visited by many people and comments are nothing but positive! Thanks to everyone for making them so special. An extra thanks to Dottie Lyon and Richard Lucier for doing some grunt work along our neighbor's fence at the Old School House.

This fall we will be installing plant material along it and Richard has accepted the challenge of digging the area up and making it suitable for
The Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society is again participating in the ArtsAlive! Competition. Voting started on July 1 and runs until September 2. Thanks to community support, we finished in second place the past two years. 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. Your votes can help the Society finish in the top five where each of the organizations receives prize money.

Our orchard fence will soon have graphics on it, and Mr. Migas is diligently working on our slate pieces so the graphics can be installed in our Children's garden as well.

Many thanks to Michael Pcolinski and Fran VanHowe for putting on an excellent Tuesday Talk about bees. We would like to have information on bees in the Back-In-Time Garden, so we hope to keep working with Mr. Pcolinski on making this happen.

I hope everyone had a chance to drive by our School House during the wedding. It was a spectacular site. With the rehearsal dinner at the museum and the wedding at the school, it was a beautiful way to showcase our gardens. Many thanks to Janet Schmidt and Ellen Donovan.

Wow! What a fun time we had at our first session of Root Camp. The kids were so cute dressed in period clothing, playing old fashioned games and listening to our very interesting guest speakers.
There are two easy ways to help us finish first this year:
1) Go to www.artsaliveallegancounty.org and vote on-line
2) If you haven't already received an ArtsAlive! envelope in the mail, you will getting one soon.

Please take a moment to vote and keep your arts alive in Allegan County.

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**German Spartacus**

*Traveler Magazine, April 2014 Article "Sommer am See"*

In the [May 2014 Society Newsletter](#), there was an article from a German magazine titled "Sommer am See". Kathy Klage, a Society member has created an English translation synopsis of the article.

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Douglas Elementary School students (L to R) Alina Martenson, Julia Lowery, Kay Erlandson and Neave Rewa
(Click on the image for a higher resolution copy)

As you read this we will be actively engaged in our second session, but are still accepting sponsors to help with our camp. If you would like to help, please go to our [web page](#). The money raised will go to keeping our gardens green. Enjoy your summer, spend time with family and friends and spend it outdoors.

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

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**Have You Ever Seen The Place You Live In From A Drone**
"SUMMER ON THE LAKESHORE"

As thoughts of summer approach, the Gay community living in the Midwest of America is drawn to Saugatuck-Douglas --- 2 small idyllic towns on the shore of Lake Michigan.

New York has Fire Island, Boston has Provincetown, Los Angeles has Palm Springs and San Francisco has Russian River Valley. Gay Americans living in the Middle West in cities like Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis & Cleveland often spend their summer vacation on the shore of Lake Michigan, specifically the twin towns of Saugatuck-Douglas. These 2 small, idyllic & neatly manicured towns lie on opposite banks of the Kalamazoo River. When the heat is blistering in the big cities during July & August, a pleasant breeze is blowing off Lake Michigan. Oval Beach, considered one of the most beautiful fresh-water beaches in the U.S., lies only a few

Jeff Zita and his drone in front of the History Museum.

Well get ready! Click HERE for a 15 second segment of a video from a drone taking off from the History Museum. This is just the beginning of a 10 minute video of all the dunelands surrounding the Museum.

The full 10 minute video is now available for viewing at the Museum. So even if you have already seen the Dunelands Exhibit, your visit will not be complete until you see the video. YOU WILL BE AMAZED!

The Museum is open daily from noon until 4 PM. Don't miss it! You will be sorry you did.

This ten minute drone video was created by Jeff Zita for the 2014 Dunelands exhibit at the History Museum. Jeff is the son of Society Board member, Renee Zita.

Swift Villa
kilometers from the city centers of Saugatuck & Douglas. Just east of the lovely lakeshore, sand dunes rise up to meet the hill-top forests. Although not officially sanctioned, for many decades gays & lesbians would gather throughout the numerous acres of the dunes to sunbathe in the nude. So often in history the gay community gravitated toward small, off-the-beaten-path places which allowed them to create artistic & free spirited communities often nestled in nature. Today anyone can meander down the friendly main streets of Saugatuck and Douglas and greet one another on the corners of the streets which are lined with art galleries, antique shops, and owner-operated stores for food, spices, wine, olive oil & fruit jams.

From here the article goes on to explain in detail several specific attractions in our towns & community members affiliated with them. The list includes but is not limited to the Old School House and our favorite curator/historian Jim Schmiechen --- also the Dunes Resort & owners Mike, Danny & Greg.

The author informs his readers that the official season begins Memorial Day weekend & runs thru the end of Labor Day weekend. He also writes that even though the season has ended, the City of Douglas hosts a Halloween parade which draws a large gay community involvement. He further recommends reservations for weekend B&B accommodations.

How many of you guessed that the model we showed you a photograph of in a previous issue was a model of the Swift Villa, one of the early buildings at Camp Gray. (Part of the Presbyterian Camps on the way to Oval Beach). The building was used as the dining hall as well as a general gathering place. The model was built by Bill Lankton. If anyone knows more about Bill and his relation to the camp, please stop by the Archives office in the lower level of the Old School House. We would like to know more about him. We are open on Monday afternoons. Or e-mail us at archives@historicalsociety.org.

When the Society was notified in April that the more than 35 buildings at the Presbyterian Camp were going to be torn down for development, we received permission to go on the property and photograph all the buildings for our archives. John Manchester graciously agreed to do this. We were also told that we could pick out some items for our historical collection. Among the things we received were several vintage items related to camp life, the Camp Gray sign (which we hope to place in the Old School House garden) and some
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, July 24
Thursday, August 7
Thursday, August 21

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.

One of the major tools we utilize is access to ANCESTRY.COM. If you are a member of the SDHS and the SDHS Family History Group, access to their billions of records is a membership benefit to you.

If you do not belong to our SDHS group, and do not wish to have your own subscription to Ancestry.com there are still substantial no-cost benefits available from Ancestry.com. These benefits are:

- Build your family tree on their website
- Provide access to that tree for family and friends
- Have access to millions of records in free databases
- Utilize Ancestry.com
- RootsWeb message boards
- Get experience with the process of building your tree
- Have fun researching your family

contemporary items from their gift shop including a mug, T-shirt and patches with their logo.

The developer, Dave Barker, also donated a number of original topographical maps and blueprints of the buildings at the camp.

Several years ago the Society received a large box of camp records dating back to its beginnings in the early 1900s. We also own a wonderful DVD about the Presbyterian Camps made in 2009 by Edwin Kamps. We now have quite a collection in our archives of materials relating to the camp. Anyone interested in creating a book? We would also appreciate any stories for this newsletter.

As the buildings were being torn down, we were told we could go back and get any signs we wanted (these were not historic). These are simple painted words on rough boards, such as "No Parking", "Straight ahead", etc. Anyone wanting to own a piece of the historic camp is invited to check out booth (#233 ) at the Blue Star Antique Mall.

submitted by Mary Voss, Collections Manager SDHS

WGVU's Michigan Hometown Stories: Saugatuck-Douglas In Full Production
In addition Ancestry.com has assembled a wealth of information on various family history research topics in video form on "youtube". Click HERE for an example.

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 newsletter column is produced by Jack Sheridan
Big Pavilion - The Middle Years

Big spenders from Chicago and St. Louis sparked the summer economy and, in spite of the depression, Saugatuck and the Big Pavilion remained a bright spot on the west shore of Lake Michigan. Good management, hard work and innovation paid off. Instead of having one orchestra perform all summer, name bands were brought in to perform in weekly succession. Special events were broadcast live and direct from the floor of the dance hall. Souvenirs were offered as a come-on. "Bank of Joy" night offered cash prizes. On "Lindberg Night" 2000 toy airplanes were dropped from the rafters. In 1930, the movie theater installed a sound system, cushioned seats and an Arctic Nu-Air circulating air system. The movie feature changed nightly.

When Elmer Deac Weed – he had run the place for three decades - died in 1936, George F. Barrett, an investor and prominent Chicago attorney, became active, along with sons George, Robert and Tom. In 1938 the Barretts obtained a liquor license and created "The Dock". The Dock was a bar and restaurant with organ music and was located below the dance floor in the northwest quadrant of the structure.

Thelma Coghlin have led the way. Presently, the program will be a ½ hour. There is still the possibility of making it a full hour.

Please consider a tax deductible donation to Michigan Hometown Stories. There are also special credit 'sponsor' opportunities available. If you have any questions or wish to make a gift, please contact Society member Jon Helmrich at 269.857.3574 or jon@ibctv.info.

We're hoping for a grand premiere at the SCA in November! submitted by Jon Helmrich

What You Missed
From Branch to Basket:
At the Pleasant Hill Farm
The décor was elegant – paneled and polished walls and a marble top bar in front of a mirrored wall. The river side wall had windows looking out on a wide boardwalk-dock. A posh place indeed: "Sparkling drinks, charcoal broiled dinners and entertainment ---" the ads touted. Walkers on the dock lusted to the sound of the Hammond organ music and the odor of beer and sizzling steaks.

On summer weekends, a Big Pavilion berth was reputed to be the choicest mooring spot on the Great Lakes. For weekend fun, what more did a yachtsman need? They came --- and made the Big Pavilion and The Dock a legend.

This newsletter column is written by Jack Sheridan.

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**Rod Aiken**

Rod Aiken, a member of the Society, passed away recently.

Click HERE for more details.

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Woman's Club Cancels
Welcome New Members

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

Arthur & Susan Lanciers, Douglas, MI
Don & Laurie Bradley, Saugatuck, MI & Nashville, TN
Christina Lewis, Saugatuck, MI
Phillip & Carol Carra, Fennville, MI
Andrew Plummer, Douglas, MI

Two new May Heath Paintings Unsurfaced

As a part of a couple years effort to celebrate the golden anniversary of the death of Saugatuck historian May Heath, we collected images of a number of her paintings and placed them in their own "photo blog". We have just received two additional images of her works.

The first is a seascape owned by Diana Beardsley of Orland Park, IL (John Sanford’s sister).

Meeting

by Donna St. Andre

On Friday May 23, 2014 the Saugatuck Woman's Club cancelled their meeting scheduled for 2:00 PM because of the road construction on Hoffman Street. This is the first time the meeting had been cancelled that current members could remember, but after researching for cancellations it was found in the SWC Secretary's notes of the meetings held in 1959, that on January 23, 1959 the SWC had cancelled the scheduled meeting due to unfavorable weather conditions. The Commercial Record of January 30, 1960 on page 6 also states that the regular SWC meeting slated for January 23 was cancelled due to inclement weather.

It has been told by some SWC members that during the Big Pavilion fire in Saugatuck that the SWC President at that time invited the ladies to her house and they still had the meeting, but not at the Woman's Club. It was found in The Commercial Record, Friday May 13, 1960, that the final scheduled meeting of the year of the SWC was held at the club house, so either the CR or the people remembering the Pavilion fire disagree on where it was held, but they agreed the SWC did have their meeting.
The second is owned by Ray Diffenderffer of Ganges Township. It belonged to his Grandmother Helen who was a good friend of May's.

May's 1930 book *Early Memories of Saugatuck, Michigan 1830 to 1930* was reprinted by the Society in 2011, with an added index, photographs, and introduction by her great-grandchildren. Mrs. Heath's book had long been looked upon as one of the most valuable resources on local history and is available at Society bookstores.

That is how important the SWC meetings are to the women in the Club.

The SWC was founded in 1904, where a few ladies met at the home of Hattie Bird (Jane Van Dis' grandmother) on the hill on Allegan Street to form a Reading Club. They started a lending library by donating books. After a few years of meeting in their homes they decided in 1910 to rent a space over the hardware store for meeting space and a library.

In 1934 Miss Breuckman donated her home to the woman's club to be used as the library. The library out grew the space and moved across the street in 1969. Later it moved to its present location on Center Street in Douglas.

In 1935 they laid the cornerstone for the auditorium that was added to the Breuckman's home. It was designed by Thomas Eddy Talmadge, the architect who designed the colonial type of building. The SWC women had to work very hard to earn the money for this new construction. There are also many stories about the ways that they raised money over the years to keep the building in good repair. The SWC members also decided to rent out the house part of the Club for a shop to help with
expenses. Rental offset by the house has been the answer to help the Club be able to offer the women wonderful programs over the years and not have to do a lot of fundraising projects for operating expenses.

The SWC have had many wonderful educational, informational, and fun programs. They have also contributed to the Library, scholarships at the School, Christmas lighting, Christian Neighbors, and many other worthy causes.

It was great fun to go back in the history of the SWC to do the research and read about the wonderful ideas and activities of the Club over the last 110 years. I am very grateful to the dedicated women that came before us to keep the spirit of the SWC going all these years.

Now women in the area of Saugatuck may join the Club. Years ago there were other Woman's Clubs in varying locations. Some examples, in the area were Douglas Woman’s Club, Fennville Woman’s Club and Allegan Woman’s Club. This year the SWC has invited the Woman’s Club from Muskegon to join us at our meeting on August 22 for our annual salad luncheon. I look forward to many more great years of the Saugatuck Woman’s Club.

Researched and submitted by Donna St. Andre
Historical Society and Saugatuck Woman’s Club member
Photos from
Behind the Scenes in the Red House Kitchen
A July 19 Dine Around Event Hosted By Ken Carls
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, open for the season daily from noon to 4pm, 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.

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 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; 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 3 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