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

What You Missed

Artist's Cottage Open House
Sunday, May 3rd from 2 - 4 PM
730 N. Maple St., Saugatuck
Hosted by John & Debby Topliff
$20 per person

On Wednesday, March 11, Jack Sheridan, the Society's photo archivist, presented a selection of postcards culled from the Society's archives. Carrying messages from vacationers and residents alike over more than a century, the cards also served to promote the area's attractions far and wide.

If you are interested in viewing the complete presentation, click HERE. Be patient, the file will take a while to download.

Mark Your Calendar

Young flowering hydrangea tree at the Topliff’s front door greets visitors approaching along a walkway around the garage/studio in background
What nicer way to melt into spring than enjoying the first Sunday afternoon in May exploring the home and grounds of Debby and John Topliff, at the next event in our sixth year of "Dine Around The Village Table" home-tour dinner or cocktail party fundraisers.

Located at 730 North Maple Street, the Topliff property is an array of visual treats as well as a bit of an intellectual excursion. Set in five acres on a steep wooded bluff overlooking Goshorn Creek and Peterson Nature Preserve, the original 1970s house has been completely reworked into a contemporary home that "feels like a glass box", bringing the outdoors inside.

This rambling main house, the Topliff's family home since 2002, features a lovely courtyard entrance and is beautifully appointed with family antiques and collections of art. Not to be missed are a number of the owner’s paintings -- large and colorful biblical narratives -- in the outlying studio connected to the garage.

Along a short pathway beyond the house, the property includes a charming 1940s cabin of vertical log exterior and pine plank interior. The structure, which the Topliffs saved from demolition in 2007, was one of several factory-built "kit" houses constructed alongside nearby Goshorn Lake just after WWII. It was methodically dismantled, packed up and moved to the Topliff property, keeping its general layout and adding interesting bits of cottage furniture and antiques. Reassembled here, it very nicely whispers “cottage,” including a sleeping loft and an outdoor shower.

Beyond the cabin, Debby created a meditation labyrinth based on an ancient 7-fold pattern. After the labyrinth the path leads through the woods to a large raised-bed garden. Behind the house a set of stairs leads down into the ravine where a corduroy path winds over the wetlands to the shallow creek. (Bring your mucky boots if you want to explore further.)

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**2015 Monthly Programs and Tuesday Talks**

If you would like to sponsor one of the Monthly Programs, please REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch. Sponsorships are $150

**MONTHLY PROGRAMS**

- **April 8, Saugatuck’s Big Pool and Other Water Stories: A Preview of the 2015-16 Museum Exhibition** presented by Jim Schmiechen sponsored by Lynne Snyder
- **May 13, Rosebay Nursery Field Trip**
- **June 10, History of Coral Gables sponsored by Jolene Jackson & Lonnie Hannaford**
- **July 8, Field Trip to Peterson Preserve sponsored by Monty Collins & Jerry Dark**
- **August 12, Society Picnic at the Old School House**
- **September 9, Fishing: Commercial & Recreational**
- **October 14, Crane’s Orchard Field Trip**
- **November 11, Fire, Storm and Ice: Shipwrecks sponsored by the Star of Saugatuck, Marilyn & Bruce Starring**
- **December 13, Holiday Party**

If you would like to sponsor one of the Tuesday Talks, please REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch. Sponsorships are $150

**TUESDAY TALKS**

General sponsors: Carolyn Richards and Howard Rochte
Debby is an artist, writer and teacher with a passion for finding creative ways to express her faith. She recently published *And the World Became Color. Exploring the Bible with Paper, Pen, and Paint* (2015). Along with her biblical teaching, she offers classes on essential oils and a dance form of tai chi. John, who has a Doctor of Ministry degree, is newly retired from his career in publishing. In 2012-2013 the couple spent a “gap” year in St. Andrews, Scotland where Debby studied at the University and John worked via Skype and enjoyed the famous links. They make their cabin available for personal and small-group days away and lead-guided retreats.

The date is May 3, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm.; wine and cheese will be served. With all food and beverages donated, this event's guest charge of $20 per person will fully support the Historical Society's volunteer-based programs and activities, including exhibitions at its Pump House Museum in Saugatuck, Old School House History Center and "Back-In-Time Garden Pathway" in Douglas.

For reservations, phone 269.857.5751 or e-mail info@sdhistoricalsociety.org

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**Garden Happenings**

"Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's Party!'"

--- Robin Williams

And what a party it will be! With the river starting to flow again and the big lake letting go of her blanket of ice, we are all anxiously awaiting the most wonderful time of year . . . Springtime! Although our garden still looks like she is fast asleep, we know better and the Landscape Committee is looking forward to scheduling our spring clean-up. Starting with our annual Azalea Society clean up on April 25th thanks to John Migas, all are invited to help make our garden, once again, beautiful.

The March meeting was very productive with many ideas in the works. We are planning a pruning/ fertilizing seminar after the rhododendrons and azaleas finish blooming. This seminar will accomplish two things: One . . . it will teach others how to care for their plants and
Using DNA as an aid in family history research has come into wide use and no doubt it is the wave of the future. Last month in this column I began a brief and hopefully, understandable, explanation of this complex subject [Please reread last month’s column].

I am participating in the Ancestry.com autosomal DNA program. I have submitted my DNA - a tube of spit and $99 - to Ancestry. My DNA is compared to all other samples received, both past and present. As Ancestry identifies potentially matching samples they notify the submitters. Most submitters are part of an Ancestry.com tree created by them or a family member.

For example, below is a page received by myself and the owner of the cccook21 tree showing match details. Robinson Chilcote and Amy Heathcote are my fifth great grandparents and lived in the mid 1700s near Baltimore, Maryland. Robinson Chilcote died in the Revolutionary War.

The left hand column ends with yours truly. The right hand column ends with cccook21 - a cousin that I can then contact by email. The revelation of our actual identities is left to us as desired.

Two . . .it will clean up our own garden after the blooming season. We will provide more information next month.

Also, our library might be helping us install our own "Little Free Library" for our young and young at heart visitors. We are putting a design and proposal together for the library board. Many thanks to Miss Ingrid, who approached us with the idea and will be presenting it to the library board on our behalf. Let's keep our fingers crossed for this possible addition to our garden.

We are also laying out our Children's Garden and are in need of two galvanized tanks, of sort, to grow a raised sensory garden. If anyone has a couple of vessels they would like to share with us, please free to contact Ruth Johnson at ruthannj@frontier.com.

**Root Camp's** registration is now on-line, thanks to Jim Cook. He was so patient with our committee and we truly appreciate it. Our line up for teachers this year is amazing. Our campers will be learning about and from our own Village Puppeteers - Michael Schwabe and Larry Basgall, Tom Anthrop and his wisdom on being a Tin Man, Captain Jim Schmeichen, Michael Pcolinski and his wonderful bees and a not so scary Alligator Sanctuary. Our campers will also be learning about Morse Code, churning butter, the properties of H₂O and much more.

Our camp will be held June 22-25 with two sessions available, one from 9-12 and the other from 1-4. Many thanks to our sponsors the Mignon Sherwood DeLano Foundation, the Holland Horticulture Club and Shoreline Realtors for their support.
This page is nice but most of the matches require that I dig in and go through the other tree to find a connection if there is one. About 5-10% of the reported potential matches yield a connection. The value of this exercise is that it often enables me to add data to my knowledge base and that can lead to tree additions. Also I can easily make email contact with my many distant - and no so distant - newly discovered cousins.

Ancestry.com now has a growing data base derived from analyzing about a half million submittals and their program results are evolving as their data base grows and DNA research progresses.
Stay tuned - more next month.

Got questions on how to get going? Questions on DNA? That is what we are for! Call or email us and remember, the SDHS family history group’s regular meeting schedule is the first and third Thursday of every month at the OSH.

[Note the schedule for next month varies from the usual.]

Upcoming meetings are:
Thursday, March 19
Thursday, April 16
Thursday, April 30

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

Still 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 at jack.sheridan@gmail.com 269 857-7144 or Chris Yoder at cyoder@tds.net 269 857-4327.

Our Oldest Allegan County Citizen, Ever?

On Jan. 14, 1898, the Commercial Record printed the following item:
Don't Forget to

It's that time of year to vote for the election of new Society Board members for 2015. Please click HERE to download and print your copy of the Official Ballot. Ballots must be returned by US Mail to SDHS, Box 617, Douglas, MI 49406 and postmarked no later than April 18, 2015.

Who was this lady? Where did she come from and was she really 107 at death? I've wondered about her for many years. A Feb. 2015 email from g-g-g-grandson Gregory Earl Snyder from Lansing and Crystal, MI provided the impetus (and some assistance) to "fill in some blanks" on Sophia.

Sketch from the Allegan Gazetter

The Commercial Record of Aug. 31, 1894 includes the following information about Sophia:

"Mrs. Goucher was born in lower Canada in
Last September I started a new HBC series of panoramic photographs taken from the top of Mt Baldhead. We history buffs are fortunate to have photos from this great vantage point over a long time period. The photos appearing span some fifty years, are accurately dated, and in most cases the photographer identified.

Other factors make these photos special. First, earlier photos had few mature trees to block the

1889 and at an early age she moved to Estavelut, New York state. From there she went to Clarksville, O., where at the age of 17 she married a Mr. Town, who died shortly after. A few years later she married Henry Gall of the same place, and soon after she with her husband moved to Allegan county. Later she married Mr. Goucher of Watson township, this county, who died some twenty years ago. Mrs. Goucher has been through a great many hardships and a good deal of sickness, having twice passed into a trace and was laid out for deaf, but at the present date she is able to be around the house, and, considering her age, she is comparatively a well woman. During her married life she gave birth to eight children, four by her first husband and four by her second husband. Her ancestors were all people that lived to a ripe old age. Her grandfather, John Wesley McWarren, does at the remarkable age of 107 years.” (An Allegan Gazette article after her death says in one of the trances she went to heaven and clearly remembered what she saw there)."

Digging back through the records on-line (Heritage Quest available through the Michigan e-Library on the SD Library web site), we see the 1830 census records for Clarksfield, Huron Co, OH which list a

Harry Town age 20-30
Female age 20-30
Female under 5 years

The Towns are listed directly beside two Hendricks families, the senior of which is "A.D. Hendricks", age 60-70 and female 50-69. This is the only "Town" in Clarksfield, so this seems certain to be Sophia and her first husband. In a Huron County listing of pioneers, one "Abraham
view. Second, the photographers used quality cameras with large glass plate negatives that were capable of capturing details. Though most of the glass plates are lost, the prints made from them, faithfully contain the details. When scanned at high resolution, the images yield marvelous results.

In December we had full photos of 1895 and 1906 without comment, last month was the the middle of 1895 and 1896. This month is the south third of 1895 and 1906.

The 1906 photographer is unknown but may have been Herman Simonson.

The numbers are keyed to my comments about points of interest.

20 - Roscoe Funk home built before 1874 - restoration completed recently
21 - Good Goods today - built ca 1880 - remodeled extensively in 1910 - B & B for many years
22 - Building history unknown - probably same structure is the one there today
23 – Kilwins today - built as the Odd Fellows Lodge in 1879 - has had many uses
24 – City Hall built 1880
25 – Drawbridge built 1870 - replaced by swing bridge 1903 - current bridge built 1936
26 - Basket factory started in the 1870s burned in 1926
27– The Butler today - grist mill built 1893- converted to a hotel - upper floors removed ca 1973
28– Big Pavilion site - next door to the north is the Lake Tavern
29 – Coral Gables annex today - built as store in 1873

Day Hendricks" is shown as an early settler of New London, OH (Greg Snyder indicated his name was really "Abram Dayton Hendricks" and confirms he was Sophia's father).

A listing of Huron Co, OH Marriage records (on the Huron Co., Ohio GENWEB) shows CALL, Ira . . . TOWER(sic), Sophia, Mrs. . . . 11 Jan 1834

Not a Henry, as the 1894 article claims, and not Gall, but rather Call, but clearly this record identifies the marriage of the widow Sophia.

No sign yet in the 1840 census, but in 1850 we find:

Home in 1850: Independence, Warren, Indiana
Household Members:
Name and Age
Ira Caul 60 b. MI
Sophia Caul 54 b. OH
Mary J Caul 19 b. OH
Abigail Caul 13 b. OH
Sarah Caul 9 b. IN
Harvey Caul 5 b. IN
George Caul 3 b. IN

The children's names match those known, but the youngest ones seem questionable for a 54 year old Sophia?

In the 1860 census we see a "Mary" Call living in Allegan County with John Gouhare:

Name: Mary Call
Age in 1860: 50
Birth Year: abt 1810
Birthplace: Ohio
Home in 1860: Watson, Allegan, Michigan
Post Office: Proctor
Michigan Hometown Stories: Saugatuck-Douglas to Premiere at 7 PM on May 8 at SCA

WGVU Public Media/Grand Rapids will bring the one-hour documentary Michigan Hometown Stories to the Saugatuck Center for the Arts on Friday, May 8 at 7 PM for its world premiere before airing on WGVU/PBS-Channel 35 in June.

Michigan Hometown Stories: Saugatuck-Douglas is being produced with a cooperative partnership with the Saugatuck Douglas Historical Society. Due to a generous matching grant from the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation last November and additional gifts received from members of the community, the project will be completed as a full one-hour program. The scripting and editing have begun in advance of the May premiere here in Saugatuck.

Household Members: Name and Age
John Gouhare 60
George Gouhare 15
Mary Call 50

Allegan County marriage records show that SOPHIA CALL and JOHN GOUCHER were married on 05 OCT 1860

The census of 1870 shows:
Name: Sophie Gancher
[Sophie Goucher]
Age in 1870: 67
Birth Year: abt 1803
Birthplace: Canada East
Home in 1870: Watson, Allegan, Michigan
Race: White
Post Office: Martin Corners
Household Members:
Name and Age
John Gancher 70 b. CT
Sophie Gancher 67 b. Canada East
Albertus Gancher 23 b. MI
George Call 25 b. IN

Can't find her in the 1880 census and the 1890 census was destroyed in a fire. A pension application, signed with her "X", in which she applied for a survivor’s pension based on the Civil War service of her son George W. Call, helps fill in the blanks.

Sometime before 1860, husband Ira had abandoned her and she went to be a housekeeper for elderly farmer John Goucher. We see her as "Mary Call" in the 1860 census, and in October of that year she and Mr. Goucher are married. Son George enlisted in Co. A, 4th Michigan Cavalry Volunteers on Oct. 31, 1863 and served until July 1, 1865. George suffered from TB and...
WGVU's head of production, Phil Lane, and Society members Jon Helmrich and Stephen Mottram are working together to write, edit, and produce the program. The special documentary will focus on the history, people, art, diversity, and strong community involvement in preservation, conservation, and love of our wonderful, rich, and beautiful community.

Over 30 people were interviewed and over 40 hours were taped all around the area from the Crow's Nest to the Old School House and in and around dozens of our businesses, lodgings, and galleries – even on the Star of Saugatuck and Dune Schooners.

Mark your calendar on May 8 at the SCA. You can view the list of donors (and still contribute to the project) at michiganhometownstories.org. There is also a teaser to watch showing some of the footage captured for use in the program. submitted by Jon Helmrich

Welcome New Members

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

- Mary Lou Graham, Douglas, MI
- Dan & Kelli Heneghan, Douglas, MI
- Kate McCarthy, Saugatuck, MI
- Robert Palmer, Saugatuck, MI
- Dan Ryan & Michael Riemke, Douglas, MI
- John Migas, Saugatuck, MI 49453

is shown living with the Goucher's in the 1870 census. He died of that disease on Nov. 26, 1870. Sophia's application for a dependant mother's pension was approved March 14, 1890 for $12 per month despite the fact that she had included several falsehoods in the documents. Sixty-four pages of documentation show Sophia claiming to be 100 years old, first saying she never married Mr. Goucher and then admitting in the face of other evidence that she had illegally done so, but claimed she never consummated the marriage. Mr. Goucher died in the mid 1870s and she went to live with one of her daughters. One of those giving testimony was Francis Norton, a farmer near Otsego, who not only confirmed that Ira Call was still living after Sophia's marriage to Mr. Goucher, but that he returned to the area during the war years and stayed at his house for two months, before returning to Illinois where he died sometime after the war.

In addition to the son George who died, we know what happened to two of her daughters. Polly Town Jarvis White (Oct. 22, 1830-Jul. 11, 1899) is buried in Mountain Home Cemetery in Otsego, MI. Abigail Call Hawkins Dunn Helsel died in the Chicago area in 1914.

So was she really 107 at death? It seems likely that this age of 100 was claimed in 1890 to make her case for the pension a bit more appealing. The 1830 census shows her between 20-30 years of age and with only one child. If she really married at 17 a likely birth year for her would have been closer to 1810, which matches her stated age when she was housekeeping for Mr. Goucher in 1860, and a youngest child born at age 41 seems much more likely than age 51.
John Winsor Noonan, 84

John Noonan, a long time member of the Society, passed away on February 24. Click **HERE** for more details.

Jim Schmiechen recalled that John Noonan was an amazing friend of the Museum. For many years he was the Museum co-chair in charge of facilities and operations. He was a big guy, smart and successful businessman with huge heart and an almost boyish sense of humor. We were lucky to have worked with him.

Henry Richard Van Singel, 88

Henry Van Singel, a long time member of the Society, passed away in on March 8. Click **HERE** for more details.

Ken Carls recalled that Henry was, among other things, responsible for getting the Saugatuck paint palette neon sign saved from the junk heap, restored, and placed back at the entrance to town. Also Henry was an advocate for SDHS getting and maintaining tenancy at the Pump

It would appear she was probably closer to 88 than 107 but the story was surely more appealing the way she told it.

(NOUE: Descendant Greg Snyder is the VP of the Crystal Township Historical Society (Montcalm County) and the primary writer for and editor of their quarterly newsletter.)

*submitted by Chris Yoder*

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**Fresh from Facebook**

What do the Civil War, a steamship and the circumnavigation of the globe have in common? They’re all a part of the exciting life of local citizen George N. Dutcher.

Dutcher was the son of Douglas co-founder William Dutcher, and had a spirited military career in Company I of the Fifth Michigan Calvary during the Civil War. Dutcher fought at Gettysburg and was wounded at the Battle of Brandy Station, Virginia. After reassignment to the Invalid Corps, Dutcher served as a prison guard at Camp Douglas in Chicago, where we was commended for exposing schemes of the Knights of the Golden Circle, a group of pro-slavery northerners.

After mustering out of the Army, he continued to serve the Union cause as a railway engineer in Southern Illinois. He took the first train of the North Missouri Railway to Jefferson City, where Confederate Major General Sterling Price captured him, and led Dutcher through the streets along with other captives wearing only
One of Henry's favorite sayings, "A day away from Saugatuck is a day wasted."

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**Jarrett Zeman Moves On**

Jarrett Zeman, our new Museum Specialist intern since last August has moved on. He will be preparing artifacts for display in Mississippi's two newest museums, the Mississippi Museum of History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum.

He will also be contributing to the museum's new artifact blog, *A Sense of Place*. He also is looking forward to consulting for local history organizations in Mississippi, using the many skills he learned in Saugatuck to help other museums reach the interpretive potential of SDHS. We all wish you much success.

Illustration of George N. Dutcher, undated.

For more exciting stories of famous locals and other great new content, "like" us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com).

Dutcher bravely escaped from his captors, and served as an engineer of a riverboat after the war. However, he soon suffered ill health as a result of his wounds, and when he was invited to serve on a whaling vessel bound for the Azore Islands, Dutcher accepted. He eventually circumnavigated the globe, making stops in such places as India, Australia and the Isthmus of Panama. Dutcher documented his global journey in a diary owned by the History Center.
Mardi Gras Pre-Parade Party Dine Around

News from the Archives
Recent Donations

A brass bell made in the image of Becky Sharp (from the film, Vanity Fair) cast by the Valleau Studio of Saugatuck, 1976. Donated by Carl Jennings and Larry Gammons

An oil on canvas painting 16"x12" of Goshorn Lake by Frank Kreusch donated by Ken Kutzel

Arthur Ashley, Pre-Parade Party Host

Judi Vanderbeck, Sally Winthers and Ellen Donovan
An oil on canvas board painting 16"x20" of Hibiscus by May Francis Heath 1953. Donated by Chris Spencer and Charles Aschbrenner.

May Heath was well known for her love of Saugatuck history. The Historical Society has reprints of her book, *Early Memories of Saugatuck Michigan 1830-1930* for sale at their booth in the Saugatuck Antique Pavillon.
Three WWII Ration Coupon books donated by Dave Mauger.

Six glass goblets used at the Tara Restaurant donated by Ken Carls

And a good time was had by all submitted by Sally Winthers

submitted by Mary Voss

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

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

Individual $50
Household $70
Premium $300
Corporate $500
Life $1,000
Senior (65+) $30
Senior Household $45

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

The Museum is closed for the season. Click HERE to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House History Center and Lifeboat Display is located at 130 Center Street in Douglas. For group tours, 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.

The Society's Archives office is located in the lower level of the Old School House and is open for research on Monday afternoons 1-4 p.m. Use the back stairway for easy access. Archives office phone number is 269-857-7901. E-mail: archives@sdhistoricalsociety.org

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

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