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**GENESIS OF SAUGATUCK CENTER FOR THE ARTS (SCA)
HIGHLIGHTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S APRIL 13 PROGRAM**

APR. 1, 2016 -- The story of how Saugatuck's abandoned pie factory morphed into a prominent community-based arts center highlights the next Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society monthly program on Wednesday, April 13, at 7 p.m. in the Old School House History Center, 130 Center Street in Douglas. Admission is free and public attendance is welcomed.

Presenters Kristin Armstrong, Executive Director of the Saugatuck Center for the Arts (SCA), and Bobbie Gaunt, SCA chair emeritus, will share stories and images from that organization's earliest days of conception through the renovation of the building, evolution of programming and its merger with Mason Street Warehouse, to its current state of service to the region.

Armstrong, with SCA since 2005, lives in St. Joseph with her husband and two children. She earlier wrote for Michigan History magazine and was a freelance newsletter writer for The Heritage Museum & Cultural Center in St. Joseph. Gaunt, a resident of Saugatuck with her husband Bob, was the first woman to participate in Ford Motor Company's sales and marketing management program in 1972, retiring nearly 30 years later as corporate vice president and president/CEO of Ford of Canada.

Opened in the 1950s by Lloyd J. Harriss Pie Company, the plant produced frozen fruit, creme and pumpkin pies for delivery into the Chicago market, and was bought by Rich's Frozen Foods in the mid-late 1980s. In the factory's early years, Mr. Harriss and his wife worked there, and had a Saugatuck home on Campbell Road (the Suites of Saugatuck building). At its peak, the factory recorded \$28 million in sales.

Since 2003, SCA has successfully transformed what had become Saugatuck's gateway eyesore -- a 32,000 square foot industrial derelict fronting on Culver Street -- into an inviting community asset where area residents and visitors of all ages can experience entertaining, educational, and enriching arts, theater, and cultural programs in a social setting. Attracting nearly 28,000 visitors annually, its year-round programming includes concerts, professional Equity theater, exhibitions, film, lectures, hands-on classes for adults and children, cost-free programming for K-12 students (Children's Film Festival & Pottawatomie Cultural Festival) and a farmer's market. The facility also hosts special events, corporate meetings, conferences and private wedding/party rentals throughout the year, and contributes to the area's economy by enhancing its appeal as a tourist destination.

The Historical Society's free monthly programs offer entertaining and informative insights into our community's past and present life, with thanks to this month's program sponsors S-DHS members Monty Collins and Jerry Dark.

For more information about the Historical Society, its Museum and its Old School House History Center, visit www.sdhistoricalsociety.org.



Local residents will recall Saugatuck's pie factory as it looked when beginning its transformation into today's SCA, a feat to be revisited in the April 13 Historical Society program.