



SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY | BOX 617 | DOUGLAS, MI 49406 | 269-857-5751 | www.sdhistoricalsociety.org

MARCH 2013

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

**Still haven't renewed your Society membership for 2013??
Don't miss out on a great year of events and much more! RENEW
NOW!**

Notes From Your President

On Wednesday evening, March 13, 2013, thirty one members and one guest joined Jack Sheridan as he talked about the methods one can use to trace family histories. He also included insight as to the use of DNA by Ancestry.com as a way to define regions of ethnicity. The program was interesting and informative with a wine and cheese social afterward. To my memory this was one of the largest turnouts for a program in March in recent history.

On Friday I saw my first robin of the spring. Perhaps our members will start to return as well. Many people have been gone or out of the area for vacation or to find somewhere warmer than southwest Michigan.

I happened to stop in the Pump House Museum the other day and work has begun on the *Dunelands* exhibit --- hold on to your hats; this exhibit is one that will be well worth the wait.

The April 10 General Membership meeting will feature John Migas as he talks, walks and explains about the growing azaleas and rhododendrons at the History Center Azalea Garden. The program is sponsored by the Michigan Azalea Society. As always refreshments will be served afterwards.

Dining Around The Village Table

Two of the upcoming events are already SOLD OUT, *Red House Repast* at the home of Ken Carls and Jim Schmiechen on April 20 and *Always On A Sunday Brunch* at the home of Mike and Katherine Economos on June 23 so don't miss the fun, get your reservations in for the upcoming events

**Next up on
Sunday, April 28, 2013 - 5 to 8pm
The Magnificent Trilogy
TICKETS ARE STILL
AVAILABLE!**

A progressive cocktail party and home tour of three magnificent homes on the Kalamazoo River.

**Tickets: \$100 per person.
Hosted by Monty Collins and Jerry Dark, Sandra and Travis Randolph, Skip Schipper and John Seros
3440 - 3442 Riverside Drive, Saugatuck, MI 49453**

On May 8 there will be a sneak preview of that amazing exhibit on the *Dunelands* plus introduction of the new board members that will lead the organization into the future. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for these and other ventures.

Also, remember that this summer will bring another series of Tuesday Talks beginning on July 2 --- there is always something to look forward to at the History Center and the Pump House Museum!

submitted by Marsha Kontio



2013 Society Monthly Programs

**At the Old School House History Center
except December**

April 10: The Amazing Azalea & Rhododendron Show. Join with chief gardener, John Migas as he talks, walks and explains all about growing azaleas and rhododendrons at History Center Azalea Garden.

Program sponsored by the Michigan Azalea Society.
Bright refreshments.

May 8: How the Wow? Your Insiders Preview of the upcoming *Dunelands* exhibition by Jim Schmiechen, exhibit curator. And the Society's Annual Meeting & Awards Night. Wine & Cheese.

June 12: Our Local Farmland Forecast: A 2013 Crop Report and Some Ideas for Your Table by David Geen of Hungry Village Tours who talks us through the country with local growers about farm conditions and what to expect at this fall's markets.

July 10: Low-Key Genius: O.C. Simonds and his Pier Cove Simonds was one of America's most important landscapers - and had an enormous impact on our West Michigan. Meet the author, Barbara Gieger. Wine & cheese social time.

August 14: Eat Your Way to the Top Annual Picnic at the History Center. Celebrating the Garden's Mt. Baldhead Viewing Station. Note early starting time: 6:00

September 11: Now and Then: Great Lakes - Hot Topics Long time Great Lakes observer Patty Birkholz brings past and present views of our greatest local asset

Friday, May 3, 2013 - 5 to 8pm

A Toast to the Dunelands

TICKETS ARE STILL

AVAILABLE!

Ken Tornvall will host a kick off party for the 2013 SDHS Museum exhibit opening at his home: an amazing restoration of a classic Michigan barn.

**Tickets: \$50 per person.
Hosted by Ken Tornvall
540 Campbell, Saugatuck**

- the water. Swimmingly delicious deserts.

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

November 13: Painting: the Town: Landscape, the Artist, and People by Ken Kutzel who brings stories from the Society's art collection.

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

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

Look for the 2013 Tuesday Talks weekly summer programs in an upcoming Newsletter. Sponsorships for the Tuesday Talks will also be accepted.



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

Thursday March 21

Thursday April 4

Thursday April 18

The time and place are always 3:30 in the Old School House

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

In this column I often talk about about family history discoveries. Such a discovery is called a **EUREKA!** moment. Here is my latest **EUREKA!** moment, well sort of **EUREKA!**



A Recent New Addition

Sunday, June 30, 2013 - 1 to 5 pm

Celebration of the Arts

TICKETS ARE STILL
AVAILABLE!

Come stroll the gardens and grounds of BJ Silverstone expansive property on Lake Michigan. Tour her home and a nearby 100 year old log cabin. Enjoy Plein Air artists working on site, two cabaret shows, art auction, cocktails, appetizers and lots of fun.

Tickets: \$40 per person.

Hosted by BJ Silverstone

2450 Lakeshore Drive, Fennville

News From The Archives

The year 2012 has been a busy time for us in the archive/collections department of the SDHS. 70 Accessions, (190 items) were added into the collection. Just exactly what does that mean? Each accession is a gift that was given to the Society. Most of the gifts were given recently but some a long time ago. Each accession could be made up of one or as many as 50 items. As each gift is processed, it is entered into the computer using software called Past Perfect. Paper records are also made as a back-up. Then each gift is acknowledged with a thank you letter and an official "deed of gift."

anyway.

Last month I told you about my DNA analysis. While not exactly a EUREKA! moment, it was new and interesting information about my ethnicity. Which according to this analysis from Ancestry.com is:

Scandinavian [Sweden, Norway, Denmark] 66%
Southern European [Portugal, Spain, Italy, Sicily, Malta] 22%
Eastern Mediterranean [Turkey, Caucuses, Persia] 9%
Uncertain 3%

Surprising it was, after fifteen years of family history research and thousands of folks in my family tree indicating that I was descended mostly from mid European and British Isles stock.

Hmmmm. Giving it some thought, I realized that my tree research shows the ethnicity of maybe one percent of my great grandparents over the last 1000 years. The Vikings invaded and began to settle in the British Isles and parts of Europe begining in about 800 AD. The Romans were there much before that. So the definition of my ethnicity in the case of my DNA analysis is different compared to the ethnicity as determined by my family tree.

Actually, although the DNA ethnicity is interesting, it is not the most important benefit of DNA analysis. The real benefit with the Ancestry.com project is that my DNA can be compared to other project submitters and close matches communicated to the participants.

More on that angle next month.

If you have always wanted to learn more about your family history, but have not known where and how to begin, our SDHS Family History group wants to help you. A starting point is to record what you know about your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents and send it along for a review by our volunteers to SDHS Family History Box 617 Douglas, Michigan 49406, or email a copy to either cyoder@tds.net or jack.sheridan@gmail.com. Give us time for an initial assessment. We will soon be back to you with readily found data and with suggestions on the next steps to take to learn more. Future further help is always available from the Family History group.

Your family history does not have to have any connection to

Some of the major donors were: Cynthia Sorensen, Kit Lane, City of Douglas, Ellen Bonar Wilt, George Worthington, Judy Oberholtzer, Mike Van Ark, Janet Wolbrink, and Joyce Petter.

Among the many gifts were a number of paintings, drawings, posters and photographs. If anyone has items they would be interested in donating to the society, please contact Mary Voss at archives@sdhistoricalsociety.org. Come visit the archives in the lower level of the Old School House on Monday afternoons.

submitted by Mary Voss

Saugatuck Douglas Garden Club Plant Sale at Old School House on Saturday, May 18

The Saugatuck Douglas Garden Club is pleased to announce its annual plant sale on Saturday May 18 from 10:00 to 2:00 at the Old School House. We are very excited to have our sale at the Old School House this year and hope that you will come and support us.

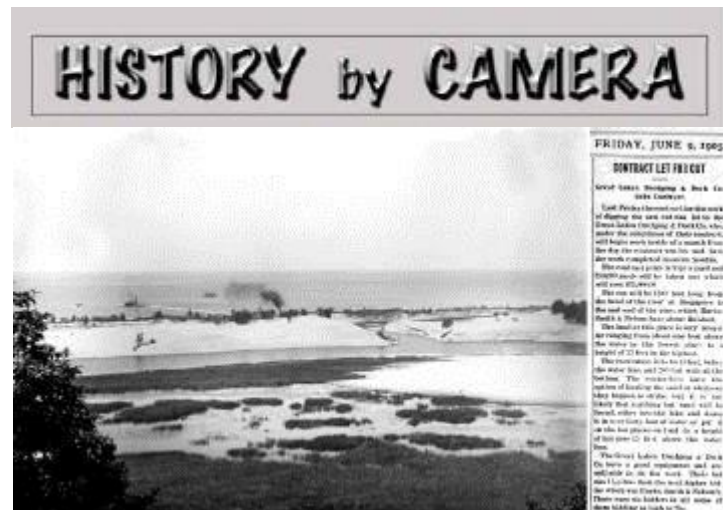
Proceeds from this sale benefit our scholarship program which is given to a high school senior from Saugatuck High School and/or Fennville High School who meet our requirements of majoring in the Horticultural Sciences in college. The garden club also contributes to Christian Neighbors, Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grace Health Facility, the Old School House gardens and annual flower beautifications in the cities of Saugatuck and Douglas. We are also Horticultural Consultants for the city of Saugatuck.

The sale will include beautiful hanging baskets, flats of annuals, many geraniums and perennials. In fact, the perennials come from our own members yards so they are tried and true. We will also have our members there to answer your gardening questions.

So mark your calendars for Saturday, May 18 and join us for a fun day. *submitted by Jane Dreyer, 616-928-1000*
janem.dreyer@gmail.com

the Saugatuck-Douglas area.

Still wondering? Questions/comments/advice/needs: Contact me at: jack.sheridan@gmail.com or 269 857-7144 . Chris is in Arizona for another month, so I am the guy on the cold seat!



Click on the picture for a higher resolution copy.

The Big Cut

This historic photo was made in the fall of 1905 or the spring of 1906. The photographer was on the high ridge which can be reached today by the path through the Tallmadge Woods leading to the Crow's Nest dune. Steam derrick smoke can be seen coming out of the sand dunes as the derrick was digging the new channel. Other vessels are working on the new piers.

On Friday May 25, 1906 the Commercial Record reported:

" . . . at 4:30 P. M. last Friday, the cut, which has been watched for months by all of the people in this vicinity, was gotten nearly enough completed to let the water through to Lake Michigan and leave Fishtown and the lighthouse on an island. The operation was watched by a crowd and a little later the yacht, Green Devil, in charge of Capt. Henry Perkins, took a party through, which was the first to use the new cut."

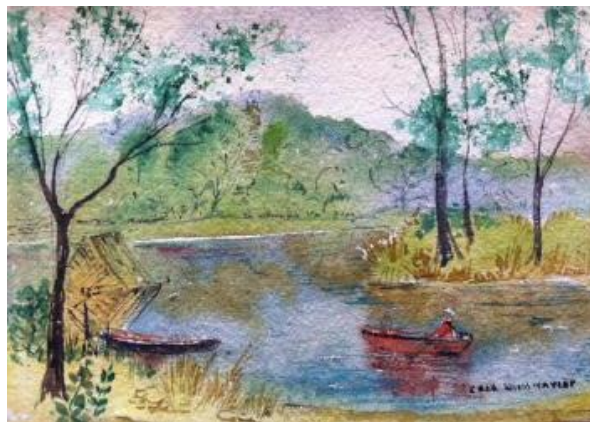
It is known that the new channel cut through an area once occupied by a Singapore lumber mill as the diggers complained about the difficulty of digging through sawdust. Looking at the scene one realizes how the sand dunes must have moved since the abandonment of Singapore some thirty

The "Village Table" Receives Review



"The Village Table" was reviewed in the February 20, 2013 issue of the Herald-Palladium newspaper. They reprinted the Kirby House "Gram's Rocks" cookie and Everyday People Cafe's Mussels Molnardo recipe. Click [HERE](#) for the complete article.

Notes from the Gallery



It is always fun to share a new acquisition with the Society members. This month, Cynthia Sorensen, one of our most diligent and loyal volunteers brought in a small watercolor done by Cora Bliss Taylor. The painting, pictured above, shows a man fishing in front of Mt. Baldhead. Taylor has taken some liberty with the composition, but the steps to the summit are evident. Cynthia remembers the painting hanging in her dining room as far back as the 1940s, so it is safe to guess that the work was done circa 1940.

years previously.

In June 1905, the Commercial Record reported the construction details of the project - see the text attached to the photo.

Next month - we see and discuss the area from another vantage point!



Click on the picture for a higher resolution copy.

submitted by jack.sheridan@gmail.com

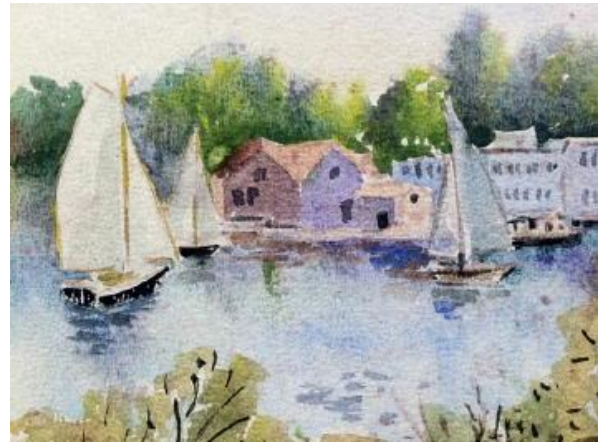
Welcome New Members

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

- 1 Lynne Snyder, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 S & K Staffing, Clinton Township, MI
- 1 Mollie & Tom Weber, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 Floyd Fleming, South Haven, MI
- 1 Richard & Sara Ann Barilla, Douglas, MI
- 1 Joe Russell, Douglas, MI
- 1 Jean Rayko. Fennville, M
- 1 Larry & Lisa Pentiuk, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 Mark LaChey & Bryan Hoffman, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 Mac & Barb McDonald, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 Dan Fox, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 Philip Raywood, Douglas, MI
- 1 Jim & Candy Jeltema, Saugatuck, MI
- 1 Don Schipper & John Seros, Saugatuck, MI

Presently, the watercolor is undergoing conservation, but should be installed in the Old School House Gallery by next month. Thank you, Cynthia for this generous gift!

When Jane Underwood found out that another work by Cora Bliss Taylor was undergoing conservation work for the Society, she offered to underwrite the expenses. This work, *Three Sailboats*, has been in our collection since 2006, when it was presented to us by Joan Lalley. Pictured below, it depicts sailboats on the Kalamazoo River with the Tourist Home Hotel in the background. The restoration of this painting is complete and the work is again hanging in the Old School House Gallery. Thank you, Jane Underwood, for making possible the preservation of Joan Lalley's gift!



Saugatuck/Douglas Museum Host

Looking for a way to connect with our local history while having the opportunity to meet people from all over the world? Volunteer to be a host at the Saugatuck-Douglas Museum this year.

To be a Museum Host all you will need to do is:

- Volunteer for at least 1 (but hopefully more) 2-hour shift during this year's season. The Museum is open daily from Noon to 4 p.m., Sunday, May 25 to Labor Day and Saturdays and Sundays in September and October.
- Attend a 1-hour volunteer orientation session for new Hosts on Saturday, May 18. You'll get an early preview of this brand new exhibit "*Duneland*".

If you are interested or have question about being a volunteer host just REPLY to this email or call 269-857-

1 Betsy Good & James Bouck, Saugatuck, MI
1 Peter Kauffman & Tim Augsten, Saugatuck, MI
1 Chris Seidel & Mike Mulcahy, Holland, MI
1 Barbara W. Carr, Hobe Sound, FL
1 Mark O. Davis & Nathan Keag, Douglas, MI
1 Mark Zancanaro & Peter Caridei, Douglas, MI &
Chicago, IL

Volunteer Corner

Cynthia Sorensen has been a volunteer docent for the Saugatuck Douglas Historical Society since the Pump House Museum opened in 1993. She helps Mike Economos in the museum garden by watering, raking and sweeping the walks, and wiping off the learning stations.

Cynthia also works along side Jane Osman getting the many postal mailings out to the membership. For the last three years, Cynthia has been volunteering in the archives every Monday afternoon. Since she was raised in Saugatuck, she has a firsthand knowledge of the history of the area and how it connects with the people who reside here. This has been a great help to both Ken Kutzel (art collections manager) and Mary Voss (collections/archives manager). We really appreciate your dedication and faithfulness in all you do for the Society. Thank you, Cynthia!



Cynthia Sorensen working at the
Old School House archives

5751. You will enjoy being a host and you'll get to meet a lot of nice people. It's 2 hours well spent!

Monthly Meeting Refreshments Needed



We've killed the cookie monster!!! We will now need volunteers to provide wine and cheese for the 2013 Wednesday General Membership Meetings except for August and December.

Ruth Wendell from Chicago, who loves the newsletter, indicated that they would be in Saugatuck for the May meeting (or at least are hoping to be here) and she wanted to bring wine or cheese for the September meeting. It sounded like she would team with Merle Malmquist.

Please contact Marsha Kontio at trolleyrde@comcast.net or 616-566-1239 if you can help out. Thanks.

Michigan Hometown Stories

Please join us on Thursday, March 21 at 7:00pm at the SCA for a preview and discussion session for Michigan Hometown Stories: Saugatuck & Douglas.

The team from WGVU Public Media will join Jim Schmiechen, Kit Lane, and Jon Helmrich to comment on the first oral histories that have been produced for the WGVU documentary.

We will sample interviews with Jeff Wilcox, Jane Van Dis, Maryjo Lemanski, Mike Peel, Judy Oberholtzer, and

Judy Anthrop.

An update on the fund-raising and production efforts will be presented and we will encourage audience members to join in the discussion. This preview is made possible by a grant from the Michigan Humanities Council.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

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

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

Send check payable to the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society to: PO Box 617, Douglas, Michigan 49406. You can also click [HERE](#) for a Society Membership Application.

Send items for the newsletter to: Fred Schmidt, PO Box 617, Douglas MI 49406 or email info@sdhistoricalsociety.org

HISTORY MUSEUM AND HISTORY CENTER

The Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society History Museum is located in the historic Pump House at the foot of Mt. Baldhead on the west bank of the Kalamazoo River. The Museum's 2012 exhibit was titled:

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS MUSEUM 2011-2012 EXHIBITION

updated for the 2012 season

A Village Patchwork:

Everyday Life in Saugatuck-Douglas



phone 269 857 7900
sdhistoricalsociety.org

Open daily: June–Aug
Weekends: Sept–Oct

Park Street @ Mt. Baldhead
FREE ADMISSION *Take the Chain Ferry*

*Underwritten in part by the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs
and the members of the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society*

The Museum is now closed. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House History Center and Lifeboat Display at 130 Center Street in Douglas is open to visitors by appointment. Please **REPLY** to this email or call 269 857-5751.

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.sdhistoricalociety.org