

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

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SDHC/GVSU "STORIES OF SUMMER" HISTORY HARVEST SHARES ORAL HISTORIES OCT. 3 AT OLD SCHOOL HOUSE

SEPT. 21, 2018 -- A "Community Dialogue" program shares oral histories gathered during Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's recent "Stories of Summer" History Harvests, in partnership with the Kutsche Office of Local History at Grand Valley State University, at the Old School House, 130 Center St. in Douglas, on Wednesday, Oct. 3, from 7 to 9 pm.

Admission is free and the public is invited; attendees will hear stories collected throughout the summer about life in Saugatuck and Douglas during the mid-late 1900s, and will have an opportunity to share their own stories.

The "Stories of Summer" project was designed to chronicle this area's evolution through its turbulent post-war growth of tourism and concurrent rise as a lakeshore destination for the LGBT community, as revealed in recollections of everyday life experiences that compose a broader picture of how Saugatuck and Douglas came to be as they are today.

In addition to oral history interviews, volunteers from SDHC and GVSU photographed or scanned memorabilia including old photos, scrapbooks, tourist brochures and membership cards from local organizations, as additions to SDHC's growing archives.

The project so far has netted 23 new oral histories, against the Center's goal of 30, ranging from memories of student days at Douglas Union School and stories about the "lakeshore life" near the Douglas Beach, to favorite restaurants in downtown Saugatuck and the wild and wonderful Music Festivals in the late 1960s.

Potential interviewees still have until Sunday, Oct. 7 to participate in this Stories of Summer program. Appointments for an interview session, either at the Old School House or in their own homes, may be set up at the Dialogue meeting, or by contacting SDHC's Erik Gollanek at efgollan@gmail.com. Oral history providers will receive a digital recording of their interviews on USB (stick) drive.

Supported by a \$12,000 grant awarded to the Kutsche Office by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through its "Common Heritage" program, the SDHC project shares \$250,000 in NEH funding for 23 similar projects nationwide, all aimed at capturing America's cultural heritage "hidden" in personal life stories, family histories, photo albums, newspaper clippings and other home memorabilia.

Staff members from Grand Valley's University Libraries will preserve all digitized interviews and images on-line for public access. Transcribed copies of oral histories and collected materials will be kept at SDHC's Old School House in Douglas and in an on-line database.

For more information about the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center, its Museum in Saugatuck and Old

School House in Douglas, volunteer opportunities or upcoming activities, visit www.MySDHistory.org.

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(Editor note: Please give photo credit to Adam Bird, of Bird+Bird Studio, Grand Rapids)

Caption:

Kutsche Office Director Kimberly McKee explains the oral history process to interviewees at an Old School House History Harvest event held earlier this summer.

LOGO IMAGE SEPARATELY ATTACHED (see jpeg "NEHLogo")
(as requested by NEH to be submitted with this release)