**Walk on Water**
a strolling cocktail party
Saturday, June 25 from 5:00-8:00pm
$100 per person
*Tickets still available!*

Do you remember the Dock Bar on the lower level of the **Big Pavilion**? Or one of the Water Festivals? Do you remember the **radar tower** on Mt. Baldhead scanning the skies looking for enemy aircraft over Lake Michigan? Do you remember the college kid or motorcycle invasions and music festivals of the 1960s-70s, or were you one of those "invaders?"

If you have stories, memories, photographs or documents from these events or others during time period, **we need to hear from you**! SDHS is actively searching for information for the "Cold War, Hot Towns: Saugatuck at Mid-Century" planned exhibit for 2017. **This recent past** exhibit presents a unique opportunity in that folks still remember these days and may have photos or other artifacts from this era which will assist SDHS with its research. If you would like to loan or give items for the exhibit, contact the Society to get started! Please e-mail the Society or send to PO Box 617, Douglas, MI 49406-0617.

Get a peek inside three distinctive homes on Douglas' South Water Street. Enjoy cocktails and delicious bites that reflect the varied food interests of hosts known for their culinary acumen. Experience the very personal art and style they incorporate into their living spaces.

Tickets for this triple treat are $100 per person.
Tickets available now. Just REPLY to this email and we will be in touch.

The full 2016 Dine Around Schedule can be found HERE.

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**Hooray for Clay!**
Saturday, July 23 from 5:00-8:00pm
$50 per person

Tickets now available. Just REPLY to this email to make your reservation and we will be in touch.

Come meet the new artist in downtown Douglas! Tom Krakowski (BFA College for Creative Studies) has created and sold functional and nonfunctional clay for over 40 years. He was also a Design Sculptor at Ford Motor Company for 25 years, helping create some of cars you see on the road today. Glass seminars at Ox-Bow prompted him to expand his artistic expression into glass and metal.

Go behind the scenes at a studio/gallery and explore Tom and spouse Janice's unique home and contemporary art collection. Craft beer, wine and heavy appetizers will abound. In addition to learning how Tom works his magic, guests will get the first look at a kiln opening of new pieces. One lucky guest will win a drawing to select their favorite piece, still warm from the kiln. You won't want to miss this event!

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**Mark Your Calendar: Summer Program Series**

**TUESDAY TALKS**
Beginning at 11AM at the Old School House, 130 Center Street, Douglas

- **July 5** - Native Americans in West Michigan
  Sponsored by Gun Lake Casino
- **July 12** - Trolley Times: The Trolley Car Era
  Sponsored by The Interurban
- **July 19** - SDHS Art Collection (back by popular demand!)
  Sponsored by Bart Webb
- **July 26** - History of the Venetian Festival
  Sponsored by Mike Mattern and Bill Hess
- **August 2** - Saugatuck Lighthouse and Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area acquisition history
  Sponsored by Fran and Bill Myers
- **August 9** - How artists relate to water
  Sponsored by Ken Carls
- **August 16** - The Old School House and its impact on the Community
  Sponsored by Bill and Nancy Woods
- **August 23** - The Mt. Baldhead Radar Tower
  Sponsored by Steve Hutchins
- **August 30** - Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources
  Sponsored by Sunny Hill and Maury Decoster

**A NOTE ABOUT TUESDAY TALKS**
New for 2016: Attendance is free at all Tuesday Talk programs for current SDHS members. Non-members and guests of members are encouraged to attend by making a suggested donation of $5. New memberships may be obtained with dues payment at any Tuesday Talk. Seating is first-come, first-served.

**MONTHLY MEETINGS**
All upcoming Monthly Meeting presentations begin at 7:00PM at the specific sites indicated below.

- **July 13** - Field Trip to the New Richmond Swing Bridge (Manlius Township), with a presentation by Al Weener
  Sponsored by Arthur Ashley and Darin Reiling
- **August 10** - Time TBA, Annual Society Picnic at the Old School House, Douglas
  Sponsored by Jolene Jackson and Lonnie Hannaford

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Welcome New Members!

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

- Stephen Boyd and Jennifer Davenport, Saugatuck, MI
- Brian Hunter and David Daughtery, Bettendorf, IA
- Peter Larson and Bill Fry, Douglas MI and Milwaukee, WI

What you missed

The past month has been a busy one with several Society events. Click each photo for a larger-size image. Thanks to Jim Schmiechen, Sally Winthers and Judi Vanderbeck for the photos!

SDHS is pleased to welcome two college interns from Central Michigan University for the summer of 2016: Kayla Britten and Brandon Merritt.

Kayla Britten is currently a senior working towards earning a Bachelor's of Applied Arts degree in Recreation and Event Management. With this degree she hopes to eventually work for city governments or for a non-profit organization, planning and

Thank you to those who have sponsored one of our programs! Multiple sponsors for each program are welcome and encouraged. If you would like to sponsor one of the 2016 programs, please REPLY to this email and we'll be in touch. Sponsorships are $150 and help ensure we can continue our tradition of varied and interesting programming throughout the year!

Student Interns join SDHS this summer

We celebrated the launch of a new Douglas self-guided tour on the SDHS mobile app with a walking tour and party at the J. Petter Galleries on May 22nd. Over 50 members and guests attended on a beautiful spring afternoon. Joyce Petter (center, in red) shared some of her early memories having a gallery on the Blue Star at the reception.

A big thank you to J. Petter Galleries and owner

View the full 2016 Dine Around schedule HERE.
overseeing events. She has always enjoyed attending events and in high school was able to help plan a fundraiser for her dance team, and decided that she could see herself doing this as a career.

Says Kayla, "this summer I look forward to learning about how the Historical Society works as a non-profit while learning about the history of the area. I am very excited to help with events for the society and to learn about the history and arts of Saugatuck and Douglas throughout the summer."

She is originally from Middleville, MI and grew up with three siblings and two dogs. When she is not working, she enjoys being outside especially at the beach and spending time with friends.

Brandon Merritt is majoring in Integrative Public Relations. He found this program of study to be favorable because it deals with a lot of different tactics to further a business' image, such as press releases, speech writing, press conferences, media lists, graphic design, brochures, newsletters and more. He prefers graphic design as his forte.

Says Brandon, "I love everything about Saugatuck and Douglas so far. Everybody is so friendly and willing to help out at a moment's notice. I believe that this place is an easy fit for me."

Brandon came to Central Michigan University in Fall 2012 and grew up in Alma, MI. Since then, he has made lifelong friends and had great opportunities which have furthered his understanding of the world around him. He has also taught himself to snowboard, learned how to play rugby, been a camp counselor and found this internship with the SDHS. "I like to be outside as much as possible whether it is backpacking, camping or bonfires and friends are always great to have these experiences with. I always like learning new things and being able to express them in a manner that is fun."

Having interns during the busy season is a huge benefit to SDHS, as they are already helping out with various projects and programs. Brandon will be writing press releases for all of our summer Tuesday Talks and other summer outreach and helping us enhance our overall communication. Kayla is helping SDHS grow partnerships with other organizations and execute events. Both are assisting with exhibit design, will be Root Camp counselors, and are working host shifts at the Museum. And, if that isn't enough, they are both working at The Kirby

On May 28, SDHS celebrated the beginning of the 2016 season with the season opening party. Over 100 members enjoyed food and drink on a beautiful evening surrounded by the springtime glory of the Back-in-Time Garden. Thanks to Leslie Thompson, Judi Vanderbeck, Arthur Ashley and others for organizing, and to shutterbug Sally Winthers for the photos below.
for some summer spending money - so we're certainly keeping them busy! Say hello to Kayla and Brandon when you see them around town!

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**Garden Happenings**

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."

~Audrey Hepburn

*Tomorrow* visited our Old School House garden last Wednesday, in the form of first graders!

We had 52 little kids, 2 teachers and 3 parents learn about school life "back in the day." Jim Schmiechen, Natalie Lowery, Kim Martinson and Ruth Johnson were the teachers for the morning. The students were able to dress up, ring the school bell, play old-time games, and learn a thing or two about our school, its past and the garden. It was a really fun morning for everyone, with lots of thanks and appreciation going around. Many thanks to all that helped deliver such a fun time; Nathan, our amazing executive director, Brandon and Kayla our new interns, and Ainsley Lowery, Adam Martinson and Jillian Johnson who had to take the morning off of school to help us out! We hope to see Douglas Elementary again next year.

Our garden is looking so beautiful, even with the big condo that is going up in front of our beloved Mt. Baldhead Viewing Station. The committee is in thinking mode as to how we are going to address this issue and at our next meeting we will talk about possible solutions. We will keep you posted. Also, our peach trees are infected with leaf curl. We are talking with professional peach orchard farmers to help us with this problem. The museum waterfront garden looks beautiful and is such an inviting entry for museum visitors. Thank you Mike Economos and all who are helping him!

In the next couple of weeks we will have more kids visiting us. This time it will be for camp, *Root Camp* that is! We are so excited to announce that we have filled both the morning and the afternoon sessions. We have both returning campers and new ones. Thanks to all of you who signed the kids in your life up for Root Camp. Watch for Root Camp photos in the next issue and online on our Facebook page!

June 5 marked the first Dine Around of the 2016 season - with a field trip! A small group toured historical exhibits in Douglas and South Haven before enjoying a delicious meal at the farmhouse home of Suzie Blair.
Until next month,

The Garden and Root Camp Committees

__Director's Corner__

Many careful readers noted in the last newsletter the following text regarding Tuesday Talks in 2016:

Attendance is free at all Tuesday Talk programs for current SDHS members. Non-members and guests of members are encouraged to attend by making a suggested donation of $5. New memberships may be obtained with dues payment at any Tuesday Talk. Seating is first-come, first-served.

I'd like to explain our position for trying this new procedure:

**Increasing the Value of Membership**

"What are the benefits of being an SDHS member?"

The stellar monthly newsletter, invites to special events and parties, and opportunities to volunteer are all common answers to this question....but what else? By asking non-members to pay, those who have already contributed something via their membership get to attend - one Tuesday Talk or all nine - for free (a $45 value if you paid $5 and attended all nine; almost the price of an individual membership!). This can be a driver to attract new memberships and retain renewals. There is no change for existing

SYC's original clubhouse facility is shown at the foot of Butler Street in Saugatuck in this 1937 photo from the SDHS archives. Click for full size.

**Interested in Douglas History?**

If you answered "Yes", then you might be the perfect person to help us out!

For the past several years, SDHS has sponsored free narrated history "trolley tours" around Douglas on
members, so you may still attend for free!

Addressing Capacity
Standing-Room-Only is common at our Tuesday Talk programming. We're proud of the success of these presentations! One thing we heard as a result of the membership survey was that members far and away enjoy attending programs at the Old School House. But we recognize it's not quite fair to have members standing in the aisles while non-members who arrived first and may never contribute anything to the organization get a seat. Asking for $5 helps to even the score.

We're in the Club
In talking with other museum and historical society staff, I've learned that many other organizations do have a charge or a suggested donation for non-members to attend their programs. These amounts average from $5-10. We feel like $5 is a fair starting price for some of the excellent speakers we bring in every week in the summer.

Seating will still be on a first-come, first-served basis, and members are still welcome and encouraged to invite friends and guests to attend by paying the $5 fee (or joining as a member!). And have no fear: our Monthly Meeting programs will continue to be free for all to attend. Thank you for your understanding!

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House History
By Nancy Woods

Housed in the basement Tech Room at the Old School House History Center are hundreds of files dealing with houses and other buildings in the Saugatuck-Douglas area. The Society was privileged to receive the real estate listing files and related materials saved by Jeff Wilcox over his long and storied career as a local realtor. We also have a great deal of information compiled during preparation for the 1999 Raising the Roof exhibit and book of the same name. Additionally, records gathered during the process of applying for the Saugatuck local historic district designation are in our possession.

These three sets of files have now been integrated. They are arranged alphabetically by street name. We hope to separate the files into city sections next year, and improve the labels, but they are fairly easy to

the evenings of Summer Socials. This has been a great outreach tool to get both residents and visitors moving around and exploring the stories of other buildings and locations around the Village of Friendliness.

Longtime tour guides Marsha Kontio and Jim Schmiechen are looking to train 2 additional guides this summer to help reduce their workload. Guide requirements are simple: 1) you enjoy Douglas history, 2) you might enjoy sharing that history with a smile on your face, and 3) you are available for at least a couple of the Social nights, every other Thursday starting June 30.

Coaching, scripts, and other information provided. Contact Nathan at 269-857-5751 or by email at director@sdhistoricalsociety.org to learn more!

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New at the Saugatuck-Douglas Museum Shop

Have you climbed the 302 steps to the top of Mt. Baldhead? Welcome to the 302 club!

Mark your achievement with a commemorative T-shirt from the SDHS museum shop. Classic T-shirts are available in an understated blue-gray, ladies-cut shirts in coral and kids shirts in bright green. Stop by the refreshed museum shop and make your pick. You'll show your pride and support the SDHS.

Don't forget, current SDHS members get a 10% discount on museum store purchases!
peruse as they are. The Society frequently receives requests from area residents, asking if we can provide information and clues to their homes' past. If you are such a person, feel free to explore these files. You can access them by coming to the Old School House on Monday afternoons. The rear door should be open. If Monday's don't work for you, send an e-mail to archives@sdhistoricalsociety.org for an appointment.

And, if you have historic or current information (title search, sales listings, photos, family stories, floor plans/blueprints, etc.) about your home or other building, you can help future sleuths by donating it to the Society. Just be sure to include the address. We have several realtors amongst our members and would welcome the gift of their records, too, once they are no longer needed. Contact the archives to learn more: 269-857-7901 or the e-mail above.

By Jack Sheridan

This is the ninth month of the History by Camera feature - the BILL SIMMONS SCRAPBOOK. Bill was a semi-professional photographer, originally...

By Chris Yoder

The Commercial Record has been a local treasure for almost 150 years, but the years in which Kit and Art Lane were the owners gave us particular gems of historic interest. One example is in the Mar. 1, 1973 issue where Kit published an old letter found in the house at 234 Spear Street, formerly owned by Miss Alice Baker (1869-1954). The letter had been written in 1856 by one Merritt Towner, from the town of Deadwood (now a "ghost town") in the gold fields of California.

Alice May Baker

April the 1, 1856 Deadwood

Dear Friends, I now take time to write a few lines to let you know that I am well and I hope this will find you the same. We hain't made anything this winter at mining. We have been sluicing our claims. We shall be ready to go to washing next week. I think our claims will pay good this summer.
from Chicago, who moved to Saugatuck about 1940. He had a couple of stints as the editor of the Commercial Record. Over the next twenty two years he took numerous black and white photos.

He died in 1962 and these photos went unnoticed until 1998 when some 3,000 negatives were given to the SDHS. What a record of our town in the middle of the twentieth century!

Many have appeared in SDHS books and exhibits. However, others ended up - so to speak - on the cutting room floor, because Bill often took numerous shots of a subject. We have used only the best of them and many subjects have not been published.

The Mt. Baldhead Hotel was a historical icon because of its presence at the ferry landing and the way it developed before 1900 from a conglomeration of structures. Fire sadly ended its run in 1959. This fire was followed by others in the community. Wish those structures were still here.

Click on the image above to see the super high-definition images for yourself!

I appreciate your feedback on my captions, and the selection of these images. Please point out my good choices and my goofs by sending an email to jack.sheridan@gmail.com. I'd love to hear some feedback on my choices - how about some discussion? Subject suggestions encouraged!

Any reader comments will not be published without

I sold out last month and calculated to come home but the man couldn't raise the money and I had to take the claim back and now I can't tell when I will come. My partner and I have bought the blacksmith out in town and he is doing good business. He makes one hundred a week. If I could be content with this I could do well but I have more irons in the fire. I have got three claims to work, my expenses is eight dollars a day....

You wrote that you wanted me to send some money but I daren't at present. Since gambling has stopped it is very dangerous sending money to the states. The express has been robbed three times this winter and now they send the express once a month and have thirty men to guard it... I will send you some as soon as it is safe. There has been a great deal of robbing going on here this winter and hain't none caught.

I want you to write .. I work mining days, and work in the shop nights and Sundays. Our work in the shop is more driven on Sundays than any other days, you can see how much time I have to write.

I had a little bad luck last fall, I had a horse stole by the damd Indians which was worth one hundred and fifty. The Indians were very bad here last fall but we all turned out and drove them into Oregon. They are raising hell there.

Keep cool, tell your mother to light her pipe and smoke, and Alanson, I received them pills and was very glad, but haven't hunted much this winter. I have killed only 15 deer this winter.

Charlotte I suppose you are a great big girl by this time and begin to have sparks...

I have a letter from the Thaires boys, they wrote they wasn't doing much.

So goodbye, it is getting late and I must close. Write as soon as you get this. You may see me poking home next fall, if I can sell to suit.

Merit Towner to you all.

Kit explains that Charlotte "Lottie" Towner was the mother of Alice Baker, and was 12 years old at the time of this letter. She was born and lived in New York until coming to Allegan with her parents in 1864, so in 1856 the California letter would been sent to New York. Charlotte's father, Merritt Towner, had been born about 1792. Various census records show he had at least 3 daughters (which included Harriett and Charlotte) and 4 sons. "Alanson", mentioned in the letter, seems to have been one of
Commercial Record Obits Are Being Added

By Chris Yoder

Last September we announced that, thanks to agreement by the publisher and funding by the SDHS Board, the Commercial Record on-line would be expanded by nine years to include 1969 through 1977. These issues were posted soon after that and can be seen at:

http://sdhistoricalsociety.net/CR/find.php

Click each image for full-size.

We are now going through year by year and capturing/cropping the obituary and death announcements to add to the SDHS obit files. So far around 500 individual records have been uploaded. You can see these at:

http://www.sdhistoricalsociety.net/research/SDHSWeb/ALLOBIT/SaugatuckAreaObituaries.htm

Within the next couple months the full set through the end of 1977 should be available in the SDHS On-Line Research Center:

http://sdhistoricalsociety.net/research/index.php

The Baker family moved to Saugatuck in 1886 where Richard continued his trade as an expert caulk of boats both in Saugatuck as well as being called to other places when "big jobs" were in process. Initially, when he worked in Saugatuck harbor on the piers, he boarded with the Underwoods at the lighthouse. Later he bought the Spear Street home of Capt. Tyler which stayed in the family until the death of his unmarried daughter Alice in 1954. Alice rests in Riverside Cemetery beside her parents (all three are good candidates for the fall daffodil planting).
Interested in learning more about your family history? Many times, folks who "aren't into history" find the research and learning in tracing their ancestors back to be a truly exciting experience - especially with more resources than ever available at one's fingertips!

The Family History Group can help you in your quest, whether you are new to family history research or just want to learn more about sources and records. Got questions on how to get going? That is what we are for! Call or email us or take note of these upcoming regular meetings of the SDHS Family History Group:

- **Thursday June 23**
- **Thursday July 7**
- **Thursday June 21**

These upcoming meetings are in the Old School House in the downstairs tech room, and begin at 3:30pm. Note that your family history does not have to have any connection to the Saugatuck-Douglas area! If you can't attend a meeting, we can still provide assistance! The only requirement is a membership in the SDHS.

Questions/comments/advice/needs - contact
Jack Sheridan:
269 857-7144
jack.sheridan@gmail.com

Chris Yoder:
269 857-4327
cyoder@tds.net

This year's added features include a special exhibit about the Pump House -- originally Saugatuck's first municipal water pumping station -- commemorating its recent placement on both the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The display includes a slide show that recalls the process of building the water system, and the near-destruction and subsequent restoration of the building with an adjacent garden.

A new Big Pavilion display shows a rarely seen 1909 aerial view of "America's second-largest dance hall" during its construction and a scale-model version of that famous building in an early stage, by local model-builder Arnie Schafer. Also new is the "Red Letter Photo Challenge", a photo-identification game inviting visitors to match red-letter-marked exhibit images with a sheet of site or event descriptions.

In 2015, nearly 9,000 visitors entered the museum and thousands more toured the garden. Encourage your friends and visitors to come by and explore our exhibits! And don't forget, members get a 10% discount on items at the Museum Shop!
The cool kids holler "YOLO!" which is an acronym for You Only Live Once.

Little do they know, free spirits and philosophers have exhorted us to live our lives to the fullest for a very long time. In 23 BC, the Roman poet Horace urged his readers to *carpe diem* or "seize the day."

So gather ye rosebuds - and enjoy some delicious food and drink - at a 2016 Dine-Around event. Click here for a preview of the 2016 events. Or reply to this email to reserve your tickets now.

**Adopt a Beach Finds Finial!**

After two years adorning the "Beach Finds" signs surrounding the Museum's patio, the ceramic finials deserve a rest. If you'd be interested in permanently adopting a retired glazed-ceramic finial, please drop by the Old School House. The finials are on display between the garage and the boat barn. Take one home today. Adoptions are first come, first served.

**ABOUT THE SOCIETY**

To become a member of the Society, select from the following categories:

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Corporate       $500
Lifetime        $1,000
Senior (65+)    $30
Senior Household $45

Send check payable to the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society to: PO Box 617, Douglas, Michigan 49406. Click HERE for a Society Membership Application.

It's membership renewal season! Send in your 2016 renewal with payment today or click HERE to renew online.

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

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY FACILITIES

The Saugatuck-Douglas History Museum is located at 735 Park Street in Saugatuck, in the historic Saugatuck Pump House building. The History Museum and WATER, our feature exhibit, is open daily from 12noon-4pm through Labor Day, then Saturdays and Sundays through the end of October. Always free to the public but donations gratefully accepted.

Click HERE to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House History Center and Francis Surfboat Exhibit is located at 130 Center Street in Douglas. For group tours of the School House, please contact Nathan Nietering at 269-857-5751 or by email at director@sdhistoricalsociety.org. The Surfboat Exhibit and Back-in-Time Garden are open to the public daily throughout the spring and summer. Old School House summer hours will be announced soon!

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. Open by appointment.

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

Society Main Phone: 269-857-5751
Museum Phone: 269-857-7900
Tech Center/Archives Phone: 269-857-7901
www.sdhistoricalsociety.org
Follow us on Facebook! Click the logo below.

Again this year, the Society's Newsletter is being underwritten by a generous donation from the late Life Member, Frances Vorys.