The mission of the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center is to preserve local history and inspire learning to inform and improve our community.

DECEMBER 2017
THE PUBLICATION OF THE
SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER
PO BOX 617 | DOUGLAS, MICHIGAN | 49406-0617
269.857.5751 | www.MySDHistory.org

We recently mailed our end-of-year fundraising appeal by U.S. Mail. We strongly believe that our work inspires learning in the community, not just about ‘traditional’ history, but about culture, the environment, and connections to current events. This important work will continue only through the generous contributions of our supporters. Please consider what you learned at a program, the fun you had at one of our community events, and the value of having an organization which preserves our fascinating local history - in short, how have we inspired you? Then make a gift, as generous as you are able, to invest in this work for 2018. Send your check or credit card information, or donate today online via our secure PayPal page by going to www.MySDHistory.org and clicking on the blue donate now button on the left, or simply click the blue button below.

B&C Directory
...in this edition, enjoy
- Message from the President, pg. 1
- Help us win a CMU Grant!, 2
- Douglas Calendar Project, 3
- Major Building Roof Work Completed, 4
- Ask Jack, 5
- From the Archives, the S.S. Eastland, 7
- Did You Say Burning the Barrel?, 8
- Board Bio - Richard Donovan, 8
- Orphan Daffodils in Douglas Cemetery, 10 and more!

From the President
As the fall winds blow we have taken down the banners to wrap up the 150th Anniversary of the Old School House commemoration. The 150th Gala was the highpoint of our social season and we would like to thank all of those who contributed their time and treasure to the History Center to make the event such a success.

We are losing two long-time Board of Directors members to retirement. Judi Vanderbeck and her husband Howard have moved to the east side of the state to be closer to their grandchildren. Judi was the force behind our highly popular Dine Around fundraisers. Her energy level and imagination will
Our goal is $15,000 - every dollar makes a difference in the work we are able to do next year. Thank you for your support!

---

**History Center a finalist for CMU Newspaper Grant; will need your help to win!**

The History Center, in partnership with the S-D District Library, is one of five finalists for the 2018 Digital Michigan Newspaper Grant award, from the Central Mich. University Clarke Historical Library. Our application is to digitize microfilmed copies of the Commercial Record newspaper spanning from 1959-1969 as a tie in to the Cold War | Hot Towns exhibit running through the end of 2018. The digital versions will be available online and both indexed and searchable, a huge step forward from the current scans hosted on our website.

To win the grant, for services worth approx. $3,500, we need your help! The winner will be chosen by a public vote, and only the project with the highest number of votes will win the grant. There will be two methods to cast your votes, each with very specific timeframes when votes will be accepted. An individual can vote as many times as they wish. Votes must follow these parameters to be counted:

- The most important project we will undertake in 2018 is to move the Archives and Collections from their current over-capacity basement space(s) up to a newly-equipped 2nd floor west room at the Old School House. This will allow our members and the public to have a comfortable and functional area for archival research. There will also be adequate custom designed shelving to meet the future needs of our growing collection of documents, photos, art, and artifacts.

Thank you for your support of our growing organization. The Board and I look forward to working with you in 2018!

-Steve Hutchins, Board President

Jim Schmiechen is also leaving the board in January to more fully enjoy his winters in warmer climates. Jim, who has been the long-time leader of our Museum exhibit creative group, will continue his involvement in the exhibitions committee. As the History Center's professional historian, Jim has won awards for both his Museum curation and publication authorship.

The History Center is grateful to both Judi and Jim for the time spent at board meetings, in addition to their other numerous organizational contributions, which have helped our organization grow and become what it is today. If you have an interest in serving on the Board of Directors as one of their replacements please contact any of the other board members to express a willingness to serve or to learn more.

Among the things to look forward to in 2018 is the continuation of the Cold War | Hot Towns exhibit. We received a lot of feedback from Museum visitors who left anecdotes which will be used to enhance the exhibit and add more first-person accounts. Visitorship was up over 14% from the year before. The Old School House will again host the Tuesday Talks, Root Camp, an exhibit upgrade, and other special events.

The Old School House will again host the Tuesday Talks, Root Camp, an exhibit upgrade, and other special events.
Vote By Mail
Good old-fashioned postcards via the U.S. Mail depicting a Michigan scene are worth 10 votes each! The postcards do not need to be mailed from Michigan, but the image they show needs to be of something in Michigan. Postcards must include the phrase '#DigSaugatuck' in the message side... a sample message might be "Go #DigSaugatuck! Help us win the Digital Newspaper Grant!" A limited number of History Center postcards will be available for free at the Old School House in early January. Postcard writers are responsible for their own postage, and postcards must be postmarked starting January 15 thru 20, 2018. Cards mailed before or after these dates will not be counted. Cards must be mailed to Clarke Historical Library, 250 E. Preston St., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

If you're feeling artsy, go ahead and make your own postcard(s) with your own design image (remember, Michigan related) and send it in; there are bonus points awarded in the "Most Artistic" and "Best Refrigerator Art" categories. The non-image side must still include #DigSaugatuck and be mailed to the address above. Friends, family, children - get them all involved! Everyone can send in a postcard or two (or more) to help us win!

Vote By Twitter
Those of us who are on Twitter can vote by this method as well, using this set of parameters: Use the hashtag #DigSaugatuck as part of your tweeting message between January 22-27, 2018. Each tweet counts as one vote. A sample tweet might be "Help me win the Digital Newspaper Grant for Saugatuck! #DigSaugatuck"

More information about voting is available here.

We will send out further instructions by email as January begins. If you don't do email but want free History Center postcards to use for voting, send a note to PO Box 617, Douglas, MI 49406 and indicate same and we will get back to you.

Your effort will help with this grant for the benefit of all!

Welcome New Members!
We would like to welcome the following new members who have joined the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center since the last newsletter!

- Larry LaBine and Tim Schwartz, Douglas, MI

SMILE, and support the History Center with Amazon!

Support the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center when you shop for the holidays or anytime throughout the year. Simply log in to your Amazon account at smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3010564 and Amazon donates a portion of your purchase dollars to SDHC! It's that easy. What could be better than that??

City of Douglas Celebrates Local History

The History Center is pleased to partner with the City of Douglas to furnish the photos for this year's Douglas municipal calendar. The pages mostly feature historic images of Douglas from the 1870s through the 1950s, curated by Jack Sheridan. A few modern photos of historical landmarks round out the pages. Thank you, City of Douglas, for your support of the History Center!
Deck the Halls...

In the spirit of the recently-fallen first snow of the year, here's an archives photo of the Saugatuck Holland Street welcome sign decorated for the holidays during a year past. Our communities' various welcome signs and the decorations that accompany them each in season may change over the years, but the festive attitude prevails! Click image for full-size, especially if you're reading this from a warm climate and almost(!) miss the snow.

We hope we've inspired you to learn something new about Saugatuck-Douglas history in 2017. Help us do even more as the new year unfolds. Click the 'inspire' insignia above to make a year-end gift today!

Major Roof Work Completed

November saw two critical facilities projects underway to preserve our historic structures, the 113-year old Pump House building and 150-year old Old School House.

As reported in the November 2017 Ball & Chain newsletter, SDHC was fortunate to receive state matching funds from the MCACA Capital Improvement grant program for the replacement of the Pump House building roof. The work entailed removing the old shingles, thoroughly inspecting the substrate and making wood repairs as needed, then applying new iceguard and shingles. We wasted no time once the 2018 state fiscal year began, and TNT Roofing and Pat Murphy Builders crews got right to work. The good news is that the roof substrate, which hasn't been seen since the current roof was put on in the early-1990s, is in really good shape. The only water damage was under one eave, (in)conveniently right above the patio entrance door. The rotted wood was cut away, new boards were fit in, and damaged rafter tails replaced. The wood will get a final coat of paint in the spring. To top this project off, the old gutters were removed, and new gutters (with much-needed leaf guards) were installed by Elite Gutter Systems. The new roof and gutters should have a long service life ahead of them, protecting our artifacts and exhibits within.
Meanwhile, over at the Old School House, water was also causing damage on the back balcony area. As it turns out, the roof over the balcony was determined to not need replacement when the building was otherwise-fully rehabilitated in 2007-2010, but that time had now come. Again, TNT Roofing crews, working with Darpel & Associates Builders, replaced the roof material and made structural repairs to the woodwork beneath. Repairs to the railing, other wooden components, and a final coat of paint will be completed in the spring. Funding for this work was allocated from the general fund.

When we state that we preserve history, we mean it. As stewards of two of Saugatuck-Douglas’ iconic historic structures, we intend to keep them as positive contributors to the neighborhoods in which each is located.

The Pump House/History Museum roof repair project is supported in part by grant funds from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs. Click the logo for more MCACA information.

By Jack Sheridan

This question comes from NN, a Douglas alert reader:
"What used to be where Coghlin Park is now?"

A good question last month. Here is another installment of a multi-issue answer. This month, I have an icy answer.

From the 1850s onward here is what used to be there: Sawmill, icehouse, commercial dockage, warehouse, fruit exchange, hotel with bar, fish houses with fishing boat dockage, fresh fish shop, seaplane anchorage and even a pie factory. Whew! Quite a bit of history for what is now the Coghlin Park area, right here on Culver Street. In the early 1900s there was an ice house there.

Why there? So happens, the Griffin and Henry sawmill and a huge pile of sawdust had been there during the previous fifty years. Here is a bit I put together some years ago about ice, sawdust and history.

In the good old days ice was not made, it was "harvested". Being close to water and close to a good source of sawdust were essential components in the ice business. First, the hollow walls of the empty ice house were loosely filled with sawdust to provide insulation - remember the ice blocks had to last a year!

A number of ice houses existed along the river beginning with the first said to have been owned by William G. Butler. The Goshorns had one at Goshorn Lake and they hauled their sawdust from Singapore.
The Shriver Brothers had two buildings in front of the Riverside Hotel at the Old Harbor. In Saugatuck, ice houses were located on Water Street between Mason and Hoffman and Eaton's Ice House [the two story building in the 1907 aerial sketch] which later became the Buerle Hotel and then the Blue Tempo which stood where Coghlin Park is today.

The Morgan ice house was located in Douglas at the east end of Center St. We have a few photos of activity there.

Before "global warming" river ice was usually a foot thick in early January. Time to get the crew and fill up the ice house. Snow was cleared from the harvest area and gridlines were etched on the ice. Cutting of the blocks commenced with the use of a special long tooth hand saw (in later years a gasoline engine powered saw was used). The blocks were floated and pushed with pikes to a ramp that could be moved up or down depending upon the level of storage in the ice house. The 100-pound blocks were pulled up the ramp by an endless chain powered by animal, steam or gasoline engine power, to a point where gravity took over and the blocks slid to a spot inside the house. As each layer was laid down a coating of sawdust was spread to insulate and prevent the blocks from sticking together.

Today we cringe when we realize that a good deal of river water found its way into the digestive system of ice house customers, but few seemed to worry about the health hazards of the product. The accepted opinion was that anything bad in the water had been frozen to death in the process ... Hmmm - the good old days?

This section is presented each issue by Jack Sheridan. Please send your questions/suggestions to jack.sheridan@gmail.com or call me at 269 857-7144.
From the Archives

By Mary Voss

Reading about the book *Ashes Under Water* in a local newspaper brought to mind an artifact that was recently donated to the History Center by the family of Charles Lorenz. It’s a pewter souvenir approximately 4” long with an image of the *S.S. Eastland*. Below is a bit about its history and a bio of the author of this new book.

*Ashes Under Water* is the untold story of the worst disaster on the Great Lakes in U.S. History. On July 24th, 1915, Chicago commuters were horrified as they watched the *S.S. Eastland*, a tourist boat taking passengers across Lake Michigan, flip over while tied to the dock and drown 835 passengers, including 21 entire families. Rockefeller, Morgan, and Carnegie had bought into the ship business in the Midwest, creating a boom market and a demand for ships that were bigger, longer, faster. The pressure-filled and greedy climate that resulted would be directly responsible for the *Eastland* disaster and others. As dramatic as the disaster was, the subsequent trial was even more so. The public demanded justice. When the immigrant engineer who was being scapegoated for the accident was left out to dry by the ship's owners, penniless and down-on-his-luck Clarence Darrow decided to take his case. The defense he mounted, which he was too ashamed to even mention in his memoirs, would be even more shocking.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF ASHES UNDER THE WATER
Michael McCarthy worked for the Wall Street Journal for twenty-two years, first as a reporter and then as an editor on feature stories. He is the author of *The Sun Farmer* and has been published in *The Southern Review*, among other publications. He has spent twelve years researching the *Eastland* case. He has lived in Chicago and now resides in South Haven, Michigan-two ports of call in the *Eastland* story.

The *Eastland* was among dozens of large lake steamers plying the Great Lakes after the turn of the 20th Century. She was built only a few years before our iconic *S.S. Keewatin* (*Eastland* was about 70 feet shorter overall) and regularly plied routes between Chicago and the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. The tragedy became the biggest single-vessel calamity in Great Lakes history; many of those lost perished within feet from the dock and in relatively shallow water. You can learn more about the Eastland from the Eastland Disaster Historical Society website: [http://www.eastlanddisaster.org/](http://www.eastlanddisaster.org/)

---

Did You Say 'Burning the Barrel'?

Story continues, next page...
By Vic Bella

The History Center's remaining commitment relating to the Barrel is to complete the signage which will be placed on the site - interpretive signage which explains the history and significance of the structure and the process of its reconstruction, and recognition of the donors who each sponsored a stave. Several methods for acknowledging the donors were explored. In the end, it was determined to be best for the Barrel's long term preservation and most cost effective to assign each stave a number, then list the donors with their stave number on a nearby sign. Wes Wooley has been numbering the barrel staves. He free-hand burns the numbers; a fun process to watch. Unfortunately, wet weather has interrupted him a couple of times. To date he has finished up to number 85.

Board Bio - Richard Donovan

[With this issue, we wrap up our year-long series showcasing a quick bio of a member of the SDHC board of directors such that our membership may know them better.]

What is your role on the board?
As a licensed attorney, I advise the Board and Executive Director regarding legal issues that arise. I also act as Chair of the Development Committee, which is charged with raising funds to meet our operating budget and fund special projects, through the annual appeal, grants, events such as Dine-Arounds and the 150th Celebration, and private donations. I also served as a member of the Strategic Planning Working
What other aspects of SDHC are you involved in?
I took the lead in submitting applications to put the Pump House and the Surfboat on the National and Michigan Registers of Historic Places. Through my role on the Development Committee, I have been involved in developing several special projects for funding, including the design of the new collections/archive room, new signage and exterior lighting for our two facilities.

What interests you most about S-D history?
I am a life-long history buff who continues to enjoy discovering new stories about the history of our area.

What is your background?
I have been a partner (now on retired status) for almost 35 years in the NYC office of the international law firm of Kelley Drye & Warren, where I practiced commercial litigation and antitrust law. My wife and I moved full time from New Jersey to Saugatuck Township in 2013. I first became involved in the SDHC after meeting several members and having Jim Schmiechen suggest pursuing a National Register nomination for the Pump House.

By Jack Sheridan

We have finished our October presentation of "WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE", and we are now looking to help others discover their lineage. See the November newsletter for info on this presentation.

YOU can see this presentation and hear some of the fascinating questions and answers by watching a recording of the show at this address: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTx_OE4S3dc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTx_OE4S3dc)

Please visit a regular Family History meeting to see what we are all about and join the group. We share "lessons learned" about the many tools available for family history research. The SDHC Family History Group can help you get started!

Note the Family History Group's upcoming meeting schedule below:
**Thursday, December 21**
**Thursday, January 4**

These upcoming meetings are in the Old School House (use the back door) 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 to participate is a current membership in the SDHC.

Questions/comments/advice/needs - contact
Jack Sheridan: 269 857-7144, jack.sheridan@gmail.com
Chris Yoder: 269 857-4327, cyoder@tds.net
In 2010, a hardy group of volunteers gathered to planted daffodils in local cemeteries at the graves of "Orphans" (folks with no descendants or with none known in the local area). Now, eight years later, this annual tradition was continued by bulb planters: Joy Muehlenbeck, Charles Hancock, Jackie Ladwein, Brett and Doreen Tubergen, Maria Roa, and Chris Yoder. Bulb recipients this year included parents of local WWI casualties featured in the November SDHC newsletter, and local folks (either veterans or survivors) who were included in the Congressional Military Pension List of 1 Jan 1883.

This issue of the newsletter reviews the people in the Douglas Cemetery who were mentioned in that pension list. For each individual, the first line of information includes: Surname, Given, Middle, Cause, Monthly Rate, Pension Certificate No., Original Date, Post Office, County

**BOYLES, James**, wounded in left hip, $4.00, 148623, Oct. 1877, Douglas, Allegan

(James Boyles (1825 Fulton, OH-1891) James Boyles enlisted as a private at Amador County, California, August 18, 1861, and was mustered into Company C, 1st California Infantry, August 26. Private Boyles accompanied the California Column across the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts and drove the Confederates back into Texas. Private Boyles was mustered out at Fort Whipple, Arizona Territory, Aug. 25, 1864. James returned to California where he re-enlisted as a private at San Diego Nov. 17, 1864, and was mustered into Company G, 4th California Infantry, Nov. 25. Private Boyles was mustered out at the Presidio of San Francisco, California, Mar. 31, 1866. After the war he relocated to Michigan where he married Sarah A. Welch Baker at Morenci, Lenawee County, Apr. 26, 1876. Later that same year James filed for a Civil War veteran's disability pension. After his death Sarah filed for a Civil War widow's pension Jan. 22, 1892.

Both James and Sarah are buried in the Douglas Cemetery. A peach appearing in his Douglas village orchard about 1880 was subsequently named "Boyles Yellow" and described in a 1908 bulletin of the Michigan State College Agricultural Experimental Station as "large and good color". It was grown in at least two other area orchards, but may now be extinct.

**GIBSON, James**, gunshot wound to thigh and right ankle, $8.00, 178553, Nov. 1880, Douglas, Allegan

(b. 1808 Northern Ireland-d. 1891 Douglas) Served in the Mexican War (which took place from 1846 to 1848). Enlisted Feb 13, 1863 Co H 3rd US Cavalry for three years, reenlisted and served another five years same company. The Commercial Record reported on May 9, 1879 that he was appointed "bridge tender" at a salary of $20 per month. He and his wife, Mary (nee Wilkins) Foley, are both buried in the Douglas Cemetery.

**GILLISPIE, Clark**, lost part of left foot, $18.00, 44914, Douglas, Allegan

(1825-1916) - Clark served as a Private with the 94 New York Infantry Company-F. He enlisted on January 31, 1865 in Auburn, New York. On Mar. 13, 1865 he was wounded in action, it was a severe wound to his left foot it had to be amputated. Due to his injury he was discharged from the war on Mar. 30, 1865. During his enlistment Clark also was a member of the GRAND ARMY of the REPUBLIC Post-19; Department-Michigan. Clark was married to Martha Slater. Died at age 91 of senility in Hartford, Van Buren Co., MI. Buried Douglas Cemetery.

**HOWE, Jerusha**, dependent mother, $8.00, 156573, Mar. 1872, Douglas, Allegan

First Michigan Sharpshooters: This is the first Union flag to fly over Petersburg, the last rebel stronghold in Virginia. On 3 Apr. 1865, after a nine-month siege, Petersburg fell to the Union. The First Michigan Sharpshooters, an elite regiment of marksmen, were the first Union troops into the city. They raised this flag (at left) over the courthouse, where it was hailed by the Union as the long-awaited signal that the war was virtually over. The flag was so shot away that the regiment was given special permission to add its battle honors to ribbons attached to the staff. This is believed to be one of the first times battle ribbons were used. The fourth ribbon from the top reads "First Flag in Petersburg."

PIERCE, Mary, widow 1812, $8.00, 22179, Apr. 1879, Douglas, Allegan
Mary (c1804 RI -1883 Douglas, MI age 82) is buried with no stone in Potter Field of the Douglas Cemetery. She was the widow of War of 1812 veteran Asa Pierce. (b c1792 NH- ) who served in Capt. Henry K Craig's C US Light Artillery (Craig went on to become Chief of Ordnance, and served 48 years before being forcibly retired as Colonel in 1861 at the age of 70) Pierce may have been the Asa Pierce who died in 1828, leaving a widow Mary Hale Pierce). Her daughter ___ married Benjamin Franklin Griswold.

WALDO, George W., gunshot wound of hand, $4.00, 136197, Douglas, Allegan

WEED, William, nasal catarrh and gunshot wound right leg, $4.00, 181337, Jan. 1881, Douglas, Allegan
(Apr. 5, 1820 Ohio- Dec. 8, 1909 Everett Snohomish County) /Residence: Jefferson, Iowa
Service Record: Enlisted as a Private on 06 August 1862 at the age of 41, Enlisted in Company H, 22nd Infantry Regiment Iowa on 27 August 1862, wounded on 22 May 1863 at Vicksburg, MS.
Mustered out Company H, 22nd Infantry Regiment Iowa on 25 Jul. 1865 in Savannah, GA. He and his second wife may have been among the charter members of the Douglas Congregational Church.

WYNN, John, gunshot wound right thigh and right shoulder,$4.00, 203838, Mar. 1882, Douglas, Allegan
Pvt John Frances Wynne or (Wynn after entering the Union Army) (b. 1844 Belgium-d. 1915) is credited with being in the 13th MI Infantry. Official record lists his injury at Chickamauga. By family anecdote he was also wounded at Stone Mountain and in Sherman's march to the sea. Close examination of his well worn uniform in the included picture (taken at Missionary Ridge, TN) shows evidence of the stitched up damage from previous battles. After the war, he bought a farm at eight dollars per acre. After Chickamauga the 13th was so decimated that they were made into a Engineering unit. bur. Douglas Cemetery. Photo thanks to Woodrow Wynne Gibson.

An added selectee in the Douglas cemetery was George Washington Brunner
The Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society was founded in 1986 by a group of charter members interested in preserving and sharing the unique history of Saugatuck, Douglas and the surrounding area. In 2016, the Society was renamed the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center to celebrate its growth and to recognize the development of the History Museum and Old School House sites. We are a vibrant organization with nearly 700 members residing in nearby communities, around Lake Michigan, and across the country.

Members are the lifeblood our largely volunteer organization. To join as a member, select from the following categories:

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

Send check payable to the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center to: PO Box 617, Douglas, Michigan 49406. Click [HERE](#) for a printable Membership Application.

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

**SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER FACILITIES**

The Saugatuck-Douglas History Museum is located at 735 Park Street in Saugatuck, in the historic Saugatuck Pump House building. The History Museum is now closed for the winter but will reopen in May, 2018. View the [virtual Cold War | Hot Towns exhibit](#) on the SDHC mobile app! Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House 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 Old School House exhibits are open by appointment throughout the winter. The adjoining Back-in-Time Garden and Surfboat Exhibit are open as autumn weather allows. Admission is free but donations gratefully accepted.

The History Center'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 History Center 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 the archives directly: archives@sdhistoricalsociety.org

History Center main phone: 269-857-5751
Museum phone: 269-857-7900
Tech Center/Archives direct phone: 269-857-7901
Again this year, the SDHC newsletter is being underwritten by a generous donation from the late Life Member, Frances Vorys.