Community Dialogue
Wednesday, October 3, 6:00pm

Experience a great evening of storytelling at the Community Dialogue for the Stories of Summer Project. This event will be a wonderful time to learn more about the everyday experiences of people in Saugatuck and Douglas from throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

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.

This project is supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities Common Heritage grant.
Upcoming Events

Wednesday, October 3, 6:00-8:00pm:
Stories of Summer Community Dialogue

Wednesday, October 10, 7:00pm:
October Monthly Meeting, "Local Authors' Take on Our Towns"

Wednesday, November 14:
November Monthly Meeting. "A Peek into the SDHC Attic: Fascinating Objects in Our Collections"

Wednesday, December 5:
Annual Christmas Party.

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2018 Lorenz and Volunteer Awards

Congratulations to our award winners, Ken Kutzel and Arthur Ashley. Announced at the annual member's picnic, Kutzel was awarded the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's top-honor Charles J. Lorenz Award of Achievement for 2018, and Arthur Ashley has been named the our Volunteer Of The Year. Both are residents of Douglas.

The Lorenz Award was established in 1997 to honor the memory of Charles Lorenz, who gave generously of his time, talent, money and energy in the formation and development of this organization. Winners are selected each year by a special History Center committee, recognizing distinguished leadership in fulfilling the Center's mission to "help the community understand its past and use its history to shape its future and preserve its quality of life".

Kutzel was cited for his long-time, significant contributions to the History Center art collection management, organizing SDHC's Collection Committee, initiating its Art Archives program, and single-mounting several art exhibits, in addition to becoming a popular presenter at the Center's monthly public programs and summertime "Tuesday Talks".

The Volunteer Of The Year Award honors outstanding service to the History Center. Candidates are nominated by standing committee chairs, and winners are selected by majority vote of the Board.

Ashley's selection for this award recognizes his role as a member of SDHC's Museum Exhibition committee, serving as the Museum Store bookkeeper as well as Museum docent, and his donation of wines for the Center's social events.

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Ken Kutzel (left) won the Charles J. Lorenz Award of Achievement for 2018; Arthur Ashley (right) is named the Volunteer Of The Year.
It's time to Step Up Into History: New Staircase Exhibit
Meghann Stevens, Archival Assistant

Anyone walking into the Old School House these days will notice something different about the staircase: What was once a stairway filled with old signs from Saugatuck businesses, is now a journey back in time through photographs of the Saugatuck-Douglas area. The new exhibit called Step Up Into History was conceived by Jim Schmeichan, a longtime volunteer and member of the exhibit team at SDHC.

SDHC has 5,000 photos in its archives, so the exhibit was designed to utilize those images. The exhibit begins at the bottom step with a photo from the present. Then, as you ascend, each step-each photo-"transports" you a little further back through time. If you want to see just how far back in time our photos go, you'll have to reach the top where further information on the photos is available.

Any visitors who can't climb the stairs, however, don't have to miss out on the fun. A panel with the photos from the exhibit, along with information on each image, is posted in the elevator. That way, everyone can enjoy the exhibit.

As for all of the old business signs, they have now found new homes in other areas of the Old School House. The only exception are the Hooptee Scootee legs which have been left in their original location on the stairs. They were simply too interesting to take down, and only added to the fun of the exhibit.

So, come down to the Old School House, where you can journey back through time with us as you Step Up Into History!

Stories from the collections: re-housing our art and archival treasures
By: Eric Gollannek, Collections Specialist

As the weather outside slowly makes the transition from summer to fall, we're seeing signs of change and progress in our work caring for new collections and the older treasures of the SDHC. This September we completed our planned move of more than 200 works of art from our collection into the newly dedicated "Art Conservation" room (former archival storage) in the lower level of the Old School House. This gives us additional space to safely house the SDHC's growing art collection as well as providing an opportunity to inspect every artwork to assess its condition and conservation needs for future care.

With over eight weeks and hundreds of hours of attention from dedicated archivist Meghann holds invaluable sources for understanding the nineteenth century history of the region, Native Stevens, we have now assessed and organized the research papers of Charles Lorenz, SDHC founding member and celebrated community historian. The Lorenz collection came to the SDHC in 2016 when we received 15 large file boxes of personal papers with original manuscript notes, copies of research articles and news clippings, photographs, and books.
The collection American history, Saugatuck shipbuilding and transportation, and of course, the history of Singapore. One of the most remarkable resources in this collection: a card catalog file with more than 11,000 cards containing research notes on individuals, place names, businesses, and ships from Saugatuck’s history from the 1700s through the 1900s. (Yes, Meghann has hand inspected every folder and item in this collection, cleaning each folder and note card, and rehousing documents in protective sleeves and archival folders and boxes!)

Finally, we're excited to share that the fully searchable collection of the Commercial Record from 1957-1967 is now available online through the Clark Library at Central Michigan University. This was made possible through our success in winning the DigMichNewspapers contest in partnership with the Saugatuck-Douglas District Library last year so try it out and let us know what new discoveries you make!

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Update on the Charles Lorenz Collection

By: Meghann Stevens, Archival Assistant

About two years ago, the SDHC received the Charles Lorenz collection, consisting of the entirety of Mr. Lorenz's research on the history of the Saugatuck-Douglas area. It was originally stored in 19 boxes full of various research, as well as a card catalog of 11,000 cards. This summer, we have been working diligently on the collection so that it can be made available for public use, and we thought it was time to provide an update: During the past three months of dedicated work with the materials, we first had to go through the collection and gain a full understanding of the scope of the work.

Afterwards, we had to organize the papers in a way that makes it comprehensible and useful for researchers. There is a little more work that needs to be done, but we are happy to announce that we are in the last leg of this race and hope to have it ready for public use in a few weeks. The next step to be taken is to enter the collection and its information into our database, which will take a little more time. Once that is done, however, it will be ready for researchers who would be able to come in and search the materials for specific topics. We hope that once the cataloging process is done, you will come and utilize this valuable collection.
"A society grows great when old men plant trees who shade they know they shall never sit it"
~Greek Proverb

Our Back in Time garden is home to old trees that have provided lots of shade to students, teachers and visitors. It is so interesting to see old pictures of our school with very young trees then and gentle giants now. The landscape committee, with the aid of an arborist, will be doing an evaluation of our large trees to find out if we are able to trim the dead branches or have to take some down. Please remember that the landscape committee will not take any trees down unless they are truly a hazard to our members, visitors and users of our facilities. Because we put in over 500 bulbs last fall, we have decided to add to our Daffodil Trail next year. Thanks to Lee and John for the installation of our rain barrel. We would like this, and our whole garden, to be a learning tool for water conservation. Please get out and enjoy the gardens in the start of their fall splendor....you will not be disappointed.

Since Nathan is no longer with us, Root Camp is in need of someone who is VERY organized and willing to help Kim and Ruth with the office stuff for camp. Our talents are definitely not in this area and would love some help this upcoming year in planning and organizing Root Camp 2019. Anyone interested in meeting and talking with us, please contact Ruth Johnson at ruthannj@frontier.com.

Until next month,
The Landscape and Root Camp Committees

This month's question comes from my friend Scott Sullivan, editor of the Commercial Record. Scott was preparing a piece for the September 19, 2018 issue of the paper. The article was on the history of the Commercial Record which, this year, is celebrating one hundred fifty years of publication. He wanted to know if I had a good resolution version of a photo of the CR office which, about 1950, was located across the street from the Uncommon Grounds on Hoffman St. I did and I sent him the photo on the next page.

The Commercial Record produced a special 150 year celebration issue - containing many histories - hit the newsstands September 20, 2018. Part of that is a front page article on the history of the Newspaper. That article is reprinted elsewhere in this newsletter - take a look for it.

Scott's plans and photo request triggered my creation of this ASK JACK. I got to thinking how the Commercial, as it was then named, looked and read in the first year of it's life, one hundred fifty years ago. Seemed to me, the loyal readers of this column might be interested in that subject.

continued on next page
To get some good stuff, I went to the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center web site to look at the 1868 images of the newspaper, only to be met with a " This page isn't working " notice. Curses! SDHC management assures me that it will soon be fixed, but you may have to wait a bit to go there yourself. The address is:
   http://sdhistoricalsociety.net/CR/find.php

Hmmm, what to do? Just so happened that I had a couple 1868 pages in my personal database so I was able to provide a good taste of the October 17, 1868 and the November 21, 1868 issues by cutting and pasting articles to the montage.

Wow, was there ever a lot going on in the fall of 1868. Makes a good read and reminds one how much connects with today - names, places, buildings, events, laments, complaints, etc. Enjoy!
Commercial Record digitized for years 1957-1967


As part of the Michigan Digital Newspaper Project, the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University took microfilm, scanned them, and added them to their online website. All the digitized newspapers are searchable by date and key word.

Please explore the easy access to *The Commercial Record* now possible through the digitization project. Check out the newspapers at [https://digmichnews.cmich.edu/](https://digmichnews.cmich.edu/)

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The Commercial Record celebrates 150 years

By: Scott Sullivan

Article originally published in the 150 year anniversary edition of *The Commercial Record* on Sept. 20, 2018

What follows is based on Kit Lane's "Brief History of The Commercial Record," which can be found online at [sdhistoricalsociety.net/CR/CRhistory.html](http://sdhistoricalsociety.net/CR/CRhistory.html).

The Big Pavilion burned down, the Hotel Butler is no more, the commercial fishing industry is gone and we have no more pie or furniture manufacturing. But *The Commercial Record* newspaper - first published in July, 1868 - continues.

The Saugatuck Commercial (now the CR) is the oldest newspaper in Allegan County in continuous publication. Its first editor was Dr. A.H. Pattee, whose medical practice (according to ads in his paper) specialized in corns and consumption.

He had previously published a paper in Hudson that he left under strange circumstances. The Hudson Post later reported, "Dr. Pattee, recently of this town, has moved on to Saugatuck where people are just discovering that he is a fakir of the worst kind." It is unclear whether they are referred to his doctoring or editing.

In 1869 The Commercial was taken over by his brother F.B. Pattee. The next year the Pattees sold to a group of Saugatuck men who established E.W. Perry as manager. The newspaper was renamed the Lake Shore Commercial to include Douglas and the lakeshore.

The location of the first newspaper office is unknown, but in 1871 the editor wrote they were moving "to new, well-lighted, pleasant rooms on the west side of the square and near the corner where..."
the pretty girls play croquet and bother our compositors."

Byron Markham became owner in 1877 and made Charles F. Wasson, a printer in the office that he probably could not afford to pay, a partner. The name was changed from Lake Shore Commercial to The Commercial, then back to Lake Shore Commercial.

Running a newspaper wasn't easy in the old days. The Oct. 26, 1877, issue said printer Wasson was late getting home from Chicago due to rough weather. It was also an unexpectedly busy week for the paper; there was a fire in Douglas and staff in the volunteer fire department had to go fight the blaze. A Mr. Dixon, who turned press for the paper, had his charge, a Mr. Hauer died and Dixon had to dress the body for burial. "What else could go wrong?" staff wondered.

Markham sold out to Wasson in March 1878. Since Wasson was a printer, he established Lena Woodhull as editor. She was one of the first woman editors in the state.

The Commercial was the only paper many people received and it covered all the news: local, national and worldwide. When the newsprint arrived, usually by boat, the news from outside the area was already printed on one side. It was placed on the press in position to have the local news and advertisements added to the back.

In April 1882 the paper was sold to Adrian Houtkamp. In 1885 Charles Winslow, a former editor, returned to Michigan and started a newspaper in Douglas called the Weekly Record. Houtkamp, incensed wrote in the Jan. 1, 1886, issue: "Three years and nine months ago I bought the Lake Shore Commercial. It has been clearly demonstrated in the past two years there is no possible show for a man with a family - let him live ever so economical - to make more than a bare living in the printing business here."

The Jan. 22, 1886, issue introduced editor Fred Wade, related to the Wades who were founding fathers of Douglas. He ran the paper for 12 years, serving simultaneously as village president for and, later, postmaster. He was also a member of the Michigan House of Representatives.

In September 1898 William P. Dunton bought the paper and changed the name back to the Saugatuck Commercial. In 1902 he bought the subscription list of the 10-year-old but struggling Douglas Weekly Record and thus began the Commercial-Record (it was hyphenated at first).

Also in 1902 the Commercial Record was sold to Otis O. Hauke, who moved the offices to Butler Street. He sold the paper April 12, 1917, as World War I was approaching and those with German surnames often found themselves in difficulty.

The new owner was Lintsford B. Goshorn, related to those who gave their name to Goshorn Lake. After his death in 1926, his wife - Saugatuck's second woman editor - continued to run the paper for more than a year.

In 1927 the paper was sold to Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Madden of Chicago. The office was on Hoffman Street. Upstairs resident Ruth Simmons said it was a fine place to live except for when the press ran. Usually this was early enough to get it into subscriber's mailboxes the same day.

When printing was delayed there was little sleep in the Simmons house. While the press was in operation you had to hang onto the bed. One night Simmons went down to complain about the noise and shaking from the press, saying she "watched all the bottles on the dresser march to the edge and jump off." She wondered when the printer would be finished so she could get some sleep.

The press was an old flatbed, which had a big arm that grasped and advanced each sheet. Parker Sands, a printer under Madden, described the sound as, "SLAM rumble, SLAM rumble." The sheets were split by a little cutting wheel and inserted and folded by hand.

By 1942 the masthead proclaimed that it was The Commercial Record, "The Oldest Newspaper in Allegan County." It was sold Oct. 18, 1946, to Robert and Gwen Crawford, who moved it to a small brick building next to their house on Culver Street. In 1950 the newspaper began being published in a smaller, or tabloid, size.

pictures were used because it was difficult and expensive to use locally-made pictures by deadline. The paper printed on an old flatbed press in the basement of the office on Lake Street. Forms were made up of text material set by linotype, handset headline type and ads. Some national photographs that arrived at the office as paper molds were filled with molten lead.

Bill Simmons

continued on next page
The newspaper was sold in 1958 to Dale E. Royer from Three Rivers, who kept Simmons as editor. Royer, a printer by profession, later said, "I tried writing something for the paper just once and got in a lot of trouble, so I left the writing to Bill from then on."

In 1951 the operation was sold to T.E. Van Dussen, who owned newspapers in Fennville and Hamilton. He printed all of them in Saugatuck.

One snowy day he turned the corner coming onto Lake Street too sharply and spilled the made-up forms over an embankment. Soon the whole staff was on their hands and knees plucking type from the snow.

In 1952 Van Dussen appointed William R. Simmons editor, so that he could provide the people a "of, by and for Saugatuck and Douglas."

Simmons wrote in a front-page column, "Harry Newnam violently denounces the base canard that the sidewalks are rolled up on Labor Day and stored for the winter. No such thing. In Saugatuck they are set up on one side to act as snow fences."

Although Simmons was an excellent photographer, as demonstrated in a 2001 exhibit, few of his

Local artist Fred Stearns created a flag (banner head) for the newspaper in 1959, which is on the front of every Commercial Record printed today. Although the perspective is off, you can recognize St. Peter's Church, the first Tara restaurant, Mt. Baldhead and the radar before the dome was put on,

the twin-stacked excursion boat, Island Queen, Coral Gables, the Big Pavilion (which burned in 1960) and the school up on the hill.

In 1967 the new owners were Kit and Art Lane of Illinois, who ran the paper for 21 years. In 1968 they celebrated the newspaper's centennial with a special edition. After all their children were in school, they purchased The Fennville Herald, which Kit edited from 1978 to 1988. It and The Commercial Record were said to be the only his-and-hers newspapers in the state.

Both were sold in 1988 to Walt and Cheryl Kaechele, owners of Kaechele Publications, which also produced The Resoriter (the CR's summer arts and entertainment sectin), Allegan County News, (Plainwell-Otsego-based) Union Enterprise the Saugatuck-Douglas Visitors' Guide.

"No one but the community truly owns the newspaper," wrote publisher Cheryl Kaechele, in a Nov. 6, 2014, editorial. "Those of us who pay the bills are stewards of the property and enable the newspaper to live beyond the age of the proprietor."

The Kaecheles retired and sold the papers in October 2015 to R. Michael Wilcox, who owns other weeklies in Clare, Mich., and Alabama.

In April 2016 he expanded The Commercial Record's format from 8x16-inch tabloid format to 8x20-inch broadsheet and circulation to include free drops at more than 80 local stores.

It continues to flourish that way.

Save the Chain Ferry
By: Steve Hutchins and Bill Hess

The future of the Saugatuck Chain Ferry is in doubt due to personnel shortages caused by the stringent Coast Guard requirements for Chain Ferry captains.

The City of Saugatuck has been working with Congressman Fred Upton to deregulate this non-motorized vessel.

In addition to the community's loss, our Museum's attendance numbers would be seriously reduced if the Chain Ferry were not operating. If you are a resident of the local congressional district please contact Fred at upiter.house.gov/contact/zipauth.htm to support his efforts to deregulate the historic Chain Ferry.
Welcome from Jack Sheridan and Chris Yoder, leaders of the Society Family History Group.

Please visit a regular 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.

Got questions?

Questions/comments/advice/needs: Mayflower ancestor, Revolutionary War vet, famous cousins, great grand parents, ...

Where did you come from?

Thinking about a DNA test?

Answering questions is what we are best at ...

Call or email us, meetings are normally the first and third Thursday every month at 3:30 at the Old School House.

Upcoming meetings:

Thursday October 4
Thursday October 18
Thursday November 1

Remember, your family history does not have to have any connection to the Saugatuck-Douglas area !!!

Not sure how to get going? Let us provide a helpful jump start by recording what you know about your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents and send it along for a review by Chris Yoder or myself.

The snail mail address is SDHS Family History Box 617 Douglas, Michigan 49406, or email a copy to either cyoder@tds.net or jack.sheridan@gmail.com.

We will soon be back to you with readily found data and with suggestions on the next steps to take. Further help is always available from Chris and myself by phone and email. Again, the only requirement is membership in the SDHS.

Join the group and find the answers.

jack.sheridan@gmail.com 269 857-7144 or cyoder@tds.net 616 212-3443

In the absence of an Executive Director, we are looking for volunteers to help us with various tasks, at least on an interim basis. We are presently looking for assistance with membership management, for people to manage the oral history collection, and other roles. Contact board president Steve Hutchins at admin@sdhistoricalsociety.org if you are interested. We have lots of ways to be involved based on your background and interests so if you have any interest we would love to talk with you about how to best use your skill-set at the SDHC.

We can't do it without you!
Root Beer Barrel Popular in History and Now

The SDHC has lots of photographs of the Root Beer Barrel when it was open from 1952 through the mid-1970s. It was a well photographed icon of Douglas. This year it became an icon again. Thank you to all who worked with the Friends of the Barrel to bring back this icon so photographs of people by the barrel in 2018 can now enter our collection.

ABOUT THE SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

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

Join as a 2018 member today! 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: SDHC Attn: Newsletter, PO Box 617, Douglas, MI 49406 or email [info@sdhistoricalsociety.org](mailto: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 open 7 days a week through Sept. 3 from 12noon-4pm daily, featuring signature exhibit Cold War | Hot Towns. Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted. If you can't travel to Saugatuck or want to revisit this landmark exhibit from home, 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 facility manager Steve Hutchins at 269-857-5751 or by email at admin@sdhistoricalsociety.org. The Old School House exhibits are open for summer hours Wednesdays-Saturdays from 11am-3pm. The adjoining Back-in-Time Garden and Surfboat Exhibit are open daily. Admission is free but donations gratefully accepted. Visit the newly opened art exhibition Keeping an Eye on History, showcasing 31 unique artworks of local scenes recently given to the History Center by members Kenneth Carls and James Schmiechen.

The History Center Archives office is on the move! In our period of transition, we ask everyone to make a research appointment in advance while we relocate our collections to new storage. To reach the archives, call 269-857-7901 or 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
www.MySDHistory.org

Follow us and learn more history on Social Media!

Facebook: @sdhistorycenter
Instagram: @sd_historycenter

Again this year, the SDHC newsletter is being underwritten by a generous donation from the late Life Member, Frances Vorys.