It's membership renewal month!

Watch your U.S. Mail this month for your renewal statement/contact info sheet. Now is the time to renew as a member to enjoy a full season of programs, events, and fun. Return the renewal statement with your payment by mail (or download and print this membership form) or click here to renew online and pay by PayPal or credit card. Don't let your membership lapse!

Save the Date for another fabulous Trilogy, "Pearls on Park," featuring the homes of Renee Zita, Steve Debbink and Greg Plowe, Guy Ballard and Richard Heriford. Stay tuned for more information in upcoming newsletters!

Join us April 11 for 'Stories of Summer'

Details explaining the coming summer's drive to harvest new oral histories and visual materials documenting our area's summers of the 1950-1970s will be unveiled at Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's next free monthly program on Wednesday, April 11, starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Old School House.

Columns continue on next page
House. Public attendance is invited and audience participation is welcomed to help enlist volunteer assistance for the effort.

Dubbed "Summers in Saugatuck", this campaign reflects the History Center's collaboration with the Kutsche Office of Local History at Grand Valley State University, supported by a $12,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through its Common Heritage program. Announced in January, the grant shares $250,000 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.

Dr. Kimberly McKee, Director of the Kutsche Office will join SDHC Executive Director Nathan Nietering in explaining what the History Center will focus on collecting, why it's important, how the Kutsche Office will assist in that effort, and how the community can help. SDHC volunteer archivists will show examples of previously collected items.

The presenters will highlight opportunities for volunteers interested in helping with essential activities such as greeting and orienting "History Harvest" participants, conducting recorded interviews, scanning historical materials into digital archives or transcribing recorded interviews into reports for future study.

No prior experience is necessary, as training for all roles will be provided in May, led by GVSU and/or History Center staffers, primarily at the Old School House.

As described by Nietering, the project was designed in partnership with GVSU and the Kutsche Office to chronicle our area's sometimes-turbulent evolution share and learn from local history, including important summer dates of "history harvest" events. (see related article here)

Sponsored by Cottage Home

May 9, The Mysterious Disappearance of Northwest Airlines Flight 2501, presented by local historian and dive expert Valerie Van Heest. In 1950, a Douglas DC-4 flew into a storm over Lake Michigan south of Glenn. Debris washed ashore but the wreck was never located. What happened? 
Sponsored by Judy Oberholtzer and Mike Mattern & Bill Hess

June 13, Field Trip to the Saugatuck Woman's Club for a special joint program where local art conservator Kari Miller Fenwood will share techniques for art conservation and discuss recent work undertaken on the Woman's Club art collection.
Sponsored by Michael & Elinor White, Marianne & Michael Giersch, and Dawn Stafford's Peachbelt Studio

Thank You to those folks listed above who have sponsored one of our programs! Multiple sponsors are welcome and encouraged and all will receive billing in future announcements. If you would like to sponsor one of our 2018 programs, please REPLY to this email and we will be in touch. Sponsorships are $150 and help support our high caliber of presentations and field trip activities!

The remainder of the Monthly Meeting and Tuesday Talk programming calendar is being finalized and will be announced when complete! It's going to be a great year.

From the President

By Board President Steve Hutchins

We would like to thank Richard Donovan, who resigned recently, for his service on the History Center Board of Directors. Richard was the leader of numerous important projects over the last two years in addition to being Chairman of the Development Committee. He lent his legal expertise to the updating of the Articles of Incorporation and the rewriting of the SDHC By-laws and Policies.

One of Richard's more visible projects was the
through its post-war growth of tourism, the development of its various art colonies, and its concurrent rise as a lakeshore destination for the LGBT community. "There's a lot of interesting stories in community memory," he says, "and want as many as possible to be included in our permanent record of this period", he says.

"We've never really undertaken this kind of collaborative partnership before," he continued. "It will be a true win for the community and is the History Center's most important project this year."

The Kutsche Office of Local History was founded in 2008 with the mission to give voice to the experiences of diverse communities in West Michigan through history. "Our partnership with SDHC reflects the Office's interest in capturing what life was like along the lakeshore in the mid-twentieth century and remember it today," McKee explains.

Enabled by the gift of the late Paul Kutsche, a Grand Rapids native and retired professor emeritus of anthropology from Colorado College, the Office provides expertise and assistance with identifying and utilizing best practices for gathering, interpreting, preserving and sharing these stories.

**Stanley Fenn Mather, 95**

History Center Life Member Stanley Fenn Mather of St. Joseph passed away Mar. 20, 2018 and was laid to rest in the Mather family plot at Riverside Cemetery with his great grand parents, grandparents, parents and brother Howard who was killed in action in WWII. Stanley also was a veteran of the war, serving in the Army's 78th Division.

He was the great-grandson of former Saugatuck

As Development Committee Chairman, Richard coordinated the fund-raising for the new archives furnishings coming to the second floor of the Old School House this spring and personally worked with the archival shelving vendor to carry out this important upgrade to our facilities. He also recruited the group that organized the highly-successful (and popular) Old School House 150th Anniversary gala.

Richard's initiative and attention to detail are reflected in the quality of work he has done for the SDHC and his efforts are greatly appreciated by our members. Thank you.

**Special Delivery**

What could possibly be arriving (or departing) from the Old School House via a United Van Lines tractor trailer? Don't miss the May newsletter to find out!
Village Clerk Dan Mather who arrived April 12, 1884 on the steamer Taylor, and that same day made his first sale of 100 pounds of oil meal to Joseph P. Shea from his feed store (now the Boardwalk Deli at 311 Water St.). Stanley's father Dan planted a tree in front of that store in 1907 which stood over 100 years before falling (see Feb 2009 and May 2013 newsletters). Survivors include his wife Mary of 63 years who he married on Jan. 15, 1955 in Saugatuck.

Emily Watts, 81

Longtime History Center member Emily Watts passed away on March 12. Click here for more information.

Come join us for

ROOT CAMP!

An interactive history and nature day camp for children ages 6-11.

Learn about: Lake Michigan shipwrecks, lighthouses, textiles and basket weaving, science and Sarett Nature Center.

JUNE 25TH - 28TH, 2018

Two sessions available:

9am - 12pm OR 1pm - 4pm

Space is limited so sign up early. Registration is available through the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center’s website at:

www.MySDHistory.org

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Facebook

Garden Happenings

"There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature." ~ Rachel Carson

Even though it is a little chilly outside, the predictable signs of spring are slowly emerging and it is really nice. One of our own special signs of spring is Mike Economos working diligently at the museum's garden. We are so lucky to have him prepare our garden for the upcoming tourist season and are hoping to hire him a little help this year. If it goes according to plan, Mike will continue to design and lead a crew in installing and making this museum garden truly amazing. Many thanks to you Mike. John and Lee will soon start their spring work at the Old School House and make that garden another showpiece for the community. With the addition of over 500 spring bulbs, new perennials, annuals from the Garden Club and Lee's own sensory gardens, this year promises to be interesting and colorful. While you are doing your spring cleaning, be on
the lookout for any antique or just old garden tools you wouldn't mind donating to the History Center. We would like to exhibit them in our Back-In-Time Garden. If you have any, please contact Ruth Johnson @ ruthannj@frontier.com. Thank you!

**Root Camp** is celebrating its 5th year this year and we couldn't be more excited! Our on-line registration is up and running and campers are signing up left and right. Camp will be June 25th to the 28th with a morning and afternoon session. Campers will be learning about lighthouses, our basket industry, and the world of science and reptiles! Thanks to our perennial sponsor, the Holland Horticulture Club, we have scholarships available again this year. **You can support Root Camp too.** If you would like to sponsor a day of camp programs, please contact Nathan @ 269-857-5751, and don't forget to sign the kids in your life up for a week of camp. We couldn't do it without you!

Until next month,

The Landscape and **Root Camp** Committees

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**Notes from the Gallery**

*By Ken Kutzel, Collections Committee Chair*

Do you recognize this image?

If you guessed that this represents the steamer *Chicora*, which was lost on Lake Michigan in January of 1895, you are correct...but there is more. This image was reproduced as the background of the "Gallinipper" surfboat and shipwreck exhibit in the boathouse on the Old School House Campus. The wreck of the *Chicora* has never been found.

The large original watercolor (38" x 21") was commissioned by the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society in 2006 and was created by Coloma, Michigan artist Randall Higdon. It was acquired by Elizabeth Eddy Plummer and was passed on to her son, Andrew, who has gifted it to the History Center in memory of his mom. We are very excited to have this great, original watercolor as part of our permanent art collection.

Interested in more information about the *Chicora*? Check out two History Center publications: *Chicora: Lost on Lake Michigan* by Kit Lane, and *Shipwrecks of the Saugatuck Area* also by Kit Lane.
By Chris Yoder
The "Panic of 1893" brought about a four year economic depression which was the worst suffered in U.S. history until that time. Massillon, Ohio businessman Jacob Coxey led a protest by unemployed workers which included an 1894 march on Washington to lobby the government to create public works jobs. Officially named the "Army of the Commonwealth in Christ", it soon became known as "Coxey's Army" after its leader. One hundred men left Massilon and marched to the capital, gaining strength and totaling 500 by the time of their arrival. Coxey was to later claim 100,000 followers.

Wikipedia tells of a Coxey connection to Holland, Michigan summer resident and author L. Frank Baum, who observed the march, and describes a reputed political interpretation of his later book the Wonderful Wizard of Oz:

"In the novel, Dorothy, the Scarecrow (the American farmer), Tin Woodman (the industrial worker), and Cowardly Lion (William Jennings Bryan), march on the yellow brick road to the Emerald City, the Capital (or Washington, D.C.), demanding relief from the Wizard, who is interpreted to be the President. Dorothy's shoes (made of silver in the book, not the familiar ruby that is depicted in the movie) are interpreted to symbolize using free silver instead of the gold standard (the road of yellow brick) because the shortage of gold precipitated the Panic of 1893. In the film adaptation of The Wizard of Oz, the silver shoes were turned into ruby for the cinematic effect of color..."

In the lead up to Saugatuck 4th of July celebrations in 1895, the June 14 Commercial Record reported:
"One of the attractive features of the Fourth of July celebrations will be a grand parade of Coxey's Army. They will be under the command of the original Gen. Coxey and will march over the principal streets."

The next week, the paper of June 21 added:
"James Davis is busy with the work of organizing the Coxey Army parade for the Fourth. A prize of two dollars will be given for the most ridiculous costume."

James Franklin Davis was then a 24 year old, newly married to Harriett Hayward. He was the son of Richard Samuel Davis (1814-1900), a Civil War veteran born in the United Kingdom, and Lydia Eleanor (Court) Davis Doud (1842-1921) both of whom are buried in the Saugatuck's Riverside cemetery. The family had moved here from Ohio in 1890.
Following the death of his mother in 1921, James and his wife moved to Corona, California where Harriet's sister Maybelle and her husband Frank Johnson owned and operated the Glen Ivy Hot Springs (from 1913 to 1942). James and Harriett were to live there the rest of their lives. Harriett died in 1931 and James in 1939. James is said to have owned "considerable valuable property" in Michigan, which he visited on annual business trips. Obituaries for both were reported in the Saugatuck paper.

The 1895 Saugatuck festivities kicked off at around 2:30 a.m. when boisterous young gentlemen set off fireworks and "dynamite bombs" around town. The steamer Bon Ami arrived with an excursion group from Ganges at 9:30, and immediately afterward the parade started off from the village hall. A group of bicycles led the way, followed by floats representing various local businesses, and Miss Thew's Kindergarten. One float contained forty two girls dressed in white with gilt lettered caps, each representing the various states of the union. Miss Delia Shaver presided over the group as the "Goddess of Liberty".

The parade marched for about a mile and ended at the village square where various speakers took the podium. The Ganges and Douglas bands added their music to that of the Saugatuck cannon (which still can be seen in our square) and foot and bicycle races occurred while lemonade and pop stands sold their ware. Fourteen year old Herman Hirner won the "tub race", but there were no entries for the sack race, the blind race, or the three-legged race.

The next day newspaper reported "At 1:30 p.m. the parade of Coxey's Army took place. Owing to the failure of those in charge to give it proper attention this portion of the program was a well-nigh failure." There is no indication that "General" Coxey was actually in attendance.
From the Archives

Isn’t it Spring YET? This vintage postcard gives us hope. (click for full-size)

By Jack Sheridan

Interested in researching family history? Considering attending this national conference!

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY 2018 FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE
IN GRAND RAPIDS 2-5 MAY 2018


Join us at the NGS 2018 Family History Conference.
Our ancestors took many paths as they built new lives. Learn to trace their steps from more than 175 sessions designed to advance your research with new techniques and resources. We’ll give you the tools to find your roots and expand your family tree. Join our experts and genealogists from all over the U.S. and beyond, for four exciting days in Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2–5 May 2018.

Learn more at http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org

Greetings from myself and Chris Yoder, leaders of the History Center Family History Group. Please come to a Family History meeting to see what we are all about and join the group discussion. We share "lessons
learned" and a whole lot more about the many tools available for family history research. The SDHC Family History Group can answer your questions and help you get started!

Note the Family History Group's upcoming meeting schedule below:

**Thursday, April 5**
**Thursday, April 19**
**Thursday, May 3**
**Thursday, May 17**

These 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 by email or phone assistance. The only requirement to participate in Family History is a current membership in the SDHC.

Family History questions/comments/advice/needs - contact:
Jack Sheridan: 269 857-7144, jack.sheridan@gmail.com
Chris Yoder: 269 857-4327, cyoder@tds.net

**By Jack Sheridan**

This month's question comes from Jane Underwood of Saugatuck. Jane asks: "I would like to know more about where folks went swimming in the old days."

Thanks Jane for your interest in our history. Here is a quick history and telling the story photos from the period 1906 - 1936, a feature that I originally researched and used for a REMEMBERING WHEN feature some fourteen years ago.

Tourists and summer visitors started coming to the Saugatuck-Douglas area in the 1880's. This created a new industry as locals converted family homes into tourist homes and built hotels to accommodate summer people. The beach was a big attraction. There was much fun there, but getting there was not easy.

Today trips to the beach are taken for granted. Much different when a trip to the Saugatuck Lake Michigan shore required a ferry ride and a long walk through the woods, or a horse and buggy ride across the bridge and through the countryside to the Douglas shore. For sure, just getting there cut way down on the beach time.

But by the early 1900s local opportunists were offering a better way - the beach taxi. Making this possible was the development of a small marine gasoline engine. These engines made boat propulsion much more practical and created a new way to get to the beach - by beach taxi. The taxis followed a regular schedule, usually four trips a day, operating from the in town docks to the Lake Michigan piers. "Two bits" was the
Before the 1906 the beach was the same location as it is today. In 1906 the river mouth was moved to the north to the current location. The old channel was closed by the shifting sand dunes. At that time, the popular beach became the "basin" - a wide spot just upriver from the new piers.

Along came the beach taxis to provide the best way to get there. These vessels were simple craft, basically water busses thirty to fifty feet long, carrying up to fifty passengers. They were built right here, by Saugatuck boat builder craftsmen and owned by local businessmen. In addition to the beach taxi trade, these boats were rented for private parties and scenic trips up river. In those days of little government regulation, an entrepreneur could get into business with a boat, dock space and a sign!

Click to see photos recalling the vessels and the mood of the era that ended in 1936 with the building of the Oval Beach, including paved roads leading to it.

The Oval Beach history is another story.

*ASK JACK is presented each issue by Jack Sheridan. This column "lives" off reader interest and inquiries. Please send your questions/ suggestions to jack.sheridan@gmail.com or call me at (269) 857-7144.*
Cold Winter (still), Cold War Memories

In the Museum's Cold War | Hot Towns exhibit this past summer, guests were able to share feedback and memories on a special bulletin board. As we impatiently dream of the end of snow and the coming summer's hot weather and hot towns, here are a few more interesting responses we received.

Bert the turtle was very alert? If so, then why wasn't he in his bomb shelter instead of walking around outside like there wasn't a Cold War going on?

The Cold War was in all the papers, so Bert must have been illiterate.

Meaning, a careless, illiterate turtle is a poor spokesman for Civil Defense.

Our school in Battle Creek had an underground "bomb shelter" and we would regularly have to practice the drill. Our cottage "on the hill" in Saugatuck was only used in the summer. My grandparent's would arrive via "cruise ship" from Chicago with my mom and aunt.

Fondest memories of running up Baldy's steps at least 4 times, then running down the "Indian Trail" swinging on a rope out into the river near the Cove; Hiking through the dune to Old Harbor and Coves; The best foot long hot dogs and root beer floats at the barrel; Delicious burgers and fries at Redwood; Chocolate sodas at the Drug Store.

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:

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**Membership renewal notices will be sent in early April.** 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](mailto:info@sdhistoricalsociety.org)

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**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 on May 26, 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 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  
Follow us and learn more history on Social Media! Click the logos below.
Again this year, the SDHC newsletter is being underwritten by a generous donation from the late Life Member, Frances Vorys.