

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

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VIRTUAL WEST MICHIGAN 1959 RETRO ROAD TRIP OPENS SDHC 2019 "TUESDAY TALK" SERIES JULY 2

JUNE 21, 2019 -- A virtual motor trip exploring Michigan's west coast circa 1959 hits the road at Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's first 2019 "Tuesday Talk" on July 2, in the Old School House, 130 Center Street, Douglas. The one-hour program begins when the school bell rings at 11 a.m. Public attendance is invited and audience participation is welcomed to enrich the discussion.

Presenters Tom Wilson and Christine Byron host this pictorial time-travel excursion in a 1959 Edsel, cruising from the Indiana border to the (then) new Mackinac Bridge, visiting coastal towns and roadside attractions along the way.

Among the tour's highlights is a ride on the *Island Queen* in Saugatuck, a dip in the lake at Grand Haven State Park, lunch at the Cherry Hut in Beulah, a stop at the Point Betsey Lighthouse near Frankfort, dinner at Leg's Inn in Cross Village and an overnight at the Perry Hotel in Petoskey. Many other points of interest include the House of David in Benton Harbor, a Coast Guard Festival in Grand Haven, Mac Wood's Dune Scooter rides at Silver Lake, and Fishtown in Leland.

Christine, retired Local Historical Collections librarian for the Grand Rapids Public Library, has long been an avid reader of Michigan history and has collected old Michigan travel and tourist memorabilia for more than twenty-five years. Tom, now retired from Sears Roebuck and Company, is an automotive history buff who has owned several vintage cars over the years, as well as a collector of Michigan real photo postcards.

This husband-and-wife team from Grand Rapids has co-authored five award-winning books in their "Vintage Views" series on the history of Michigan tourism. They also write a "Vintage Views" column in *Michigan Blue* magazine, and operate a business creating prints from old Michigan and Great Lakes tourist and travel ephemera. Both serve on the boards of the Grand Rapids Historical Commission and the West Michigan Postcard Club, and are members of other historical organizations.

Says Christine, "this road-trip idea resulted from a request by the Tri-Cities Museum in Grand Haven to create a program for the celebration of their 60th anniversary of their founding in 1959, and we've also presented it for Aquinas College's lifelong learning institute." She adds that they have done many similar programs over the last 20 years relating to the history of tourism in Michigan, including Mid-Century Modern Roadside Architecture, Vintage Views of Michigan Roadside Attractions, Dune Rides and more.

A summer tradition since 1996, SDHC's weekly Tuesday Talks present entertaining and informative insights into local community life throughout July and August. This week's Talk is sponsored by SDHC members Bill Hess and Mike Mattern.

Tuesday Talks' increasing popularity puts limited seating on "first-come, first-served" basis. While admission is free for current SDHC members, non-member guests are encouraged to attend with a donation of five dollars, or to become new members at the Talk.

For more information about the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center, its Museum in Saugatuck and Old School House in Douglas, or its activities planned for the months ahead, visit www.MySDHistory.org.

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PHOTO ATTACHED SEPARATELY (see jpeg "1959MITrip")

Caption: Christine & Tom in their 1959 Edsel tour West Michigan at SDHC's first 2019 "Tuesday Talk" July 2.