

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS  
**HISTORY**  
CENTER

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RECEPTION OPENING "STORIES OF SUMMER" EXHIBIT  
HIGHLIGHTS SDHC'S JUNE 12 FREE PUBLIC PROGRAM

MAY 31, 2019 -- A public reception and presentation, introducing a new summer exhibit showcasing the year-long SDHC/GVSU "Stories of Summer" project, highlights Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's next free monthly program on Wednesday, June 12, with the reception starting at 5pm in the "Back In Time Garden behind the Old School House, 130 Center Street, Douglas, followed by an indoor presentation at 7pm.

Throughout last year, a collaborative effort by Grand Valley State University's Kutsche Office of Local History and SDHC volunteers gathered oral-history interviews with 31 community members, recalling their experiences and perceptions of Saugatuck-area life in the mid-twentieth century. The project was funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through its "Common Heritage" program, with the mission of capturing America's cultural heritage "hidden" in personal life stories, family histories, photo albums, newspaper clippings and other home memorabilia.

GVSU students and staff then processed the recorded interviews for transcription and digital access/preservation. The result of their efforts, expressed in the new exhibit, combines interpretive panels made by GVSU staff and students with selected artifacts and artwork, memorializing such topics as beach life, the Ox-Bow School of Art, the Big Pavilion, the Red Barn Theater, the "youth invasion" of the '60s, and the emergence of this area's LGBTQ community .

Wednesday's outdoor reception, sponsored by Century 21 Affiliated from 5-7pm, will offer appetizers, beverages and band entertainment by *Halfway Creek*. Additional support provided by West Michigan Blue Star Chamber and Huntington Bank in Douglas, includes an ice cream truck to enhance Stories of Summer with "tastes of summer".

The indoor program, from 7-8pm, will tell the story behind Stories of Summer, with SDHC Director Eric Gollanek, PhD, and GVSU Kutsche Office Director Kim McKee, PhD, and sponsored by Button Gallery of Douglas along with SDHC members Don Olendorf and John Thomas.

Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's free monthly program series presents entertaining and informative insights into local history and community life. For more information about the History Center, its Museum in Saugatuck and Old School House in Douglas, and its activities planned for the months ahead, visit [www.MySDHistory.org](http://www.MySDHistory.org).

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PHOTO ATTACHED SEPARATELY (see jpeg "KMckee")

**Caption:**

Kutsche Office Director Kimberly McKee explains the oral history process to interviewees at an Old School House History Harvest event held last summer.