

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

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TALES OF WEST MICHIGAN STATE PARKS RECALLED AT JULY 20 "TUESDAY TALK"

JULY 9, 2021 -- A fond look back at the history of West Michigan's State Parks highlights Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's next "Tuesday Talk" on July 20, starting at 11 a.m. in the "Back-In-Time Garden" behind the Old School House, 130 Center Street in Douglas. The one-hour program begins when the school bell rings at 11 a.m. To assure comfortable outdoor seating, attendees are encouraged to bring their own camp chairs if possible.

Presenters M. Christine Byron and Thomas R. Wilson will share old photos and postcards to tell the story of these State Parks, most of which border on the shores of Lake Michigan. Although 1919 officially marked their founding, it was in 1920 that Michigan's first State Parks were established and opened to the public, with Grand Haven and Silver Lake State Parks among the first. By 1930, twelve State Parks were located on or near the old West Michigan Pike corridor, and today there are nineteen along this historic route.

Together, Christine and Tom have done many similar programs over the last 20 years relating to the history of tourism in Michigan, covering Mid-Century Modern Roadside Architecture, Vintage Views of Michigan Roadside Attractions, Dune Rides and more.

As married historians living in Grand Rapids, they share a love of Michigan and a fascination with its history, especially the evolution of its tourism industry. Christine, retired Local Historical Collections librarian for the Grand Rapids Public Library, has long been an avid student 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. He operates a business creating prints from old Michigan and Great Lakes tourist and travel ephemera.

Their combined collections were the inspiration for their five-book "Vintage Views" series on the history of Michigan Tourism, published between 2002 and 2011. Three of their books have won Michigan Notable Book awards from the Library of Michigan and two earned State History Awards from the Historical Society of Michigan.

A summertime tradition since 1996, SDHC's weekly Tuesday Talks present entertaining and informative insights into local community life and history throughout July and August. This program is sponsored by members and repeat sponsors Don and Laurie Bradley.

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.

Saugatuck-Douglas History Center is supported in part by the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information about SDHC, its Museum in Saugatuck and Old School House in Douglas, and its activities planned for the months ahead, visit www.MySDHistory.org.

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PHOTO ATTACHED SEPARATELY (see jpeg "GH1946")



Caption : 1946 photo of happy Grand Haven State Park beachgoers samples the fond memories revisited in SDHC's July 20 Tuesday Talk.