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**HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S NOVEMBER 11 PROGRAM
REOPENS MYSTERY OF FISHING TUG "GOTHAM"**

A fresh look at the mystery of what happened to the Saugatuck fishing tug "Gotham" 72 years ago will highlight Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society's next monthly program on Wednesday, November 11, at 7 p.m. in the Old School House History Center, 130 Center Street, Douglas. Admission is free and open to the public.

Presenting "Winter Storm and Saugatuck's Greatest Maritime Tragedy", S-DHS historian and longtime archivist Jack Sheridan will briefly overview local shipwreck history and examine the clues he has pulled together to make sense of the Gotham's sinking in December of 1943.

In that heyday of Great Lakes commercial fishing, he explains, the boats went out in all seasons despite the dangers, and thousands of them never came back. As reported in The Commercial Record on December 17, 1943: "During the heavy windstorm of Saturday night when a 60-mile gale was blowing in Lake Michigan, the Gotham, a steel fishing tug belonging to Lou Gotham and his sons [and two others], in trying to make the harbor at Saugatuck, apparently struck the north pier and was sunk".

But, as Sheridan proposes, striking the pier was only part of the disaster, and later evidence suggests a bigger story. This strong, 51-ft. diesel-powered tug, built in Saugatuck for Lake Michigan fishing, was designed to cut like a knife through rough waves rather than ride over them. This raises the intriguing question he attempts to answer, regarding why the Gotham lost its battle with giant waves.

This month's program is sponsored by our iconic paddlewheel tourboat *Star of Saugatuck* and its owners Marilyn & Bruce Starring.

For general information about the Historical Society, its History Museum in Saugatuck, Old School House History Center in Douglas, programs, social activities and volunteer opportunities, visit www.sdhistoricalsociety.org.



Lost fishing tug "Gotham", shown here returning to Saugatuck after being raised in May, 1944, sparks a search for its true story in the Historical Society monthly program on November 11.