

Historical Society of Saginaw County

Annual Report 2010

The Historical Society is committed to serve the community by telling the continuing story of the people of the Saginaw region through exploration, preservation, and presentation of their historical and cultural heritage.

from the president David M. Hall

Of all the years the Historical Society of Saginaw County has been in existence, I think 2010 may have been our most important. Let me explain why: We were facing the greatest downturn in our economy since the Great Depression, jobs by the millions have been shed by the wayside and countless families have lost their homes. And in that climate of uncertainty, we faced a millage that could have closed the doors of our beloved Castle Museum, a beautiful structure built 113 years ago.



The millage renewal vote was scheduled for August 3rd and there was much preparation underway as teams of volunteers, board members and supporters campaigned for approval of the funding. Meetings were held, fundraising was carried out and numerous presentations were made in support of the millage. No one knew how the vote would turn out and to even speculate would have been fruitless.

And then came the day of reckoning...the date of the vote. As the polls closed we all sat glued to our television screens waiting to see what the voters would decide. We needn't have worried. The "yes" votes came pouring in and never trailed the "no" ballots. In fact, the millage was approved by a whopping two to one margin! For that, we owe you and all of our supporters a great deal of gratitude.

So now, with your help, we move forward into 2011. It will be an exciting year and you can expect to hear more positive news coming from your Castle Museum. Thanks again for all that you do for the Historical Society of Saginaw County.

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2010 Budget

(Subject to Audit)

	Budget	Actual
Income		
Contract Revenue	\$1,042,417	\$1,042,417
Membership	\$ 25,000	\$ 23,071
Gifts and Grants	\$ 4,500	\$ 78,077
Admissions	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,320
Miscellaneous	\$ 8,000	\$ 11,533
Interest Income	\$ 3,500	\$ 1,686
Museum Store	\$ 9,500	\$ 12,249
Total Income	<u>\$1,100,417</u>	<u>\$1,176,353</u>
Expense		
Personnel	\$ 604,408	\$ 604,390
Building Operation	\$ 113,201	\$ 106,556
Museum & Society Operation	\$ 109,545	\$ 102,876
Grants to Out County Museums	\$ 100,598	\$ 100,623
Offsite Locations	\$ 9,000	\$ 5,931
Annex Location	\$ 30,000	\$ 29,439
Museum Professional Functions	\$ 48,200	\$ 110,358
Museum Store Operations	\$ 6,500	\$ 2,192
Special Projects	\$	\$ 71,035
Total Expense	<u>\$1,021,452</u>	<u>\$1,133,400</u>

Grants Received in 2010

The Museum is thankful for the community support

Citizens Bank	\$25,000	(Front Entrance Project)
Andersen Foundation	\$15,000	(Manufacturing Exhibit)
Leo & Emily Kahan Trust	\$10,000	(Saginaw Cyclecar)
Saginaw Community Foundation	\$ 5,200	(History on the Move)
Gerstacker Foundation	\$ 5,000	(History on the Move)
Hausbeck Pickles & Peppers	\$ 3,000	(History on the Move)
Harvey Memorial Foundation	\$ 1,000	(General Support)
Korean War Veterans	\$ 1,000	(American Soldier)
Saginaw Community Enrichment	\$ 500	(Summer Celebration)
The Wally & Jo Stroebel Foundation	\$ 500	(General Support)
Team One Credit Union	\$ 350	(History on the Move)
TOTAL	<u>\$66,550</u>	



I can't begin to describe the elation that we all feel here at the Castle Museum after the outstanding year 2010 turned out to be. All-time records were shattered in so many categories: The most visitors ever recorded, most memberships ever recorded, most grants received, most people to attend a Lunch and Learn lecture, the most people to attend our annual Holiday Party, the list goes on and on.

And then there were other milestones: the passage of our millage renewal; the acquisition of the 1914 Saginaw Cyclecar; the discovery and display of pieces of the 1850s Wood Plank Road; the debut of *History on the Move*, a mobile museum which visits area schools; the premiere of virtual field trips through which students can use the Internet to visit the museum without leaving their classrooms; the discovery by Museum archaeologists and volunteers of remnants of the Great Saginaw Fire of 1893.

All of these accomplishments are enough to take your breath away but there is one important point to emphasize...none of it could have been done without the support of our Historical Society of Saginaw County members, our volunteers, our Board of Directors and our Castle Museum Associates. The Castle Museum is more than just a building filled with artifacts; it is a collaboration of people working together for a common goal.

We all belong to this organization which is one of the leading arts and cultural institutions in this region. For that we can be proud. From the bottom of my heart, thanks to you for your unwavering support of the Castle Museum. I can't wait to see what we can accomplish in 2011!

It's no surprise that 2010 turned out to be a banner year for the Historical Society of Saginaw County and the Castle Museum. In the first two months alone, the Museum opened three new exhibits that captured the public's hearts and minds, and began a year where attendance would reach an all-time high.



Early in the year, visitors were able to see an exhibit of photographs focusing on teenagers and immigration that was organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. Centennial Hall was not empty for long as the eagerly-anticipated exhibit, *The American Soldier*, opened on February 18th. More than 3,300 people visited the Castle while *The American Soldier* was on display and no one walked away disappointed. "This is an amazing exhibit that captures the realities of war and the human side of it. Great job!" That was the comment made by Msgt Kristen Kindle, Retired USAF.

Some of our guest speakers during this time included Brigadier General James R. Anderson and USMC Veteran Jim White, who fought at Iwo Jima during its most famous battle, *Operation Detachment*.

In the picture at right members enjoy a delicious pancake brunch as our way of saying "thank you" for being a Historical Society member. It also was the official kickoff to our 2011 Membership Drive.



In the picture at left, guests talk to one of our military re-enactors at an event the Museum sponsored during The American Soldier exhibit.

In the picture below left, a participant works on designing an Easter egg in the Czech style of decorating during an American Girl party.

Below, City Engineer Phil Karwat talks at a press conference about how construction workers uncovered wood planks thought to be from the Saginaw Wood Plank Road built in the 1850s.



A Look Back at 2010

Happy faces could be found everywhere at the Museum's annual Holiday Party. In 2010 nearly 1,000 people visited the Castle to enjoy crafts, a cookie and a visit with Santa.



In the spring work began on the steps near the front entrance. New sidewalks and signage complete the project.

Chief Curator Sandy Schwan teaches students at St. Stephen Elementary School about what an archaeologist does as part of our History on the Move program, which is a mobile museum and classroom available for free to all Saginaw County schools.



In addition to *The American Soldier*, we also featured a small but powerful exhibit on homelessness in collaboration with the Public Libraries of Saginaw. It included a mural, individual works of art, photography and poetry and a panel exhibit with oral history highlights along with a short documentary video.

In another display, the Museum was proud to pay tribute to the Saginaw branch of the NAACP as it celebrated its 90th anniversary. It included artifacts, a history of the organization and stories of prominent African Americans in Saginaw County.

There was no time to sit back and relax after *The American Soldier* closed on April 10th. In the spring the Museum premiered a fun display of posters from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum in Cleveland. Accompanying the posters were artifacts from the Museum's collection documenting the impact of rock and roll.

During this time, the Museum also began work on several beautification projects that would continue throughout the year. Our front steps and walkway were reconstructed into a design that now complements the Castle.



The Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association chose the Museum as a MSUE-approved project and several members of the group and other volunteers worked very hard at the Museum pulling weeds, planting, trimming and much more.

History on the Move Makes its Debut

As the weather turned warmer, new and exciting things continued to happen at the Castle. On April 23rd, we unveiled our mobile museum and classroom, *History on the Move*, to third-grade students at Ling Elementary School in Hemlock.

After months of hard work and planning, it was fantastic to share this interactive mobile museum with the students of Saginaw County - at no cost to the schools. Once inside the truck, students are transformed into junior archaeologists and learn not only what an archaeologist does, but what types of archaeology projects are happening right here in mid-Michigan.

Also in April, the Museum was able to share with the public three-inch pine planks that were discovered under East Genesee by construction crews. The planks are believed to be connected to the historic wood plank road built in the 1850s by Saginaw founder Norman Little. The planks are now on permanent display.



replica of The Polar Express. Each week during the month of December the Museum held Polar Express Pajama parties which proved to be popular events.

What's In Store for 2011?

As the year was winding down it appeared that the Museum would break its attendance record previously set in 2000. The goal? To reach 15,500 by year end. Not only did we reach that goal, but surpassed it by welcoming 16,379 visitors to the Museum in 2010. Judge William Crane chose the Castle Museum as the location for his "Farewell to the Judgeship" - an event that drew more than 600 people.



After a year like 2010, there could be concern of how to "beat that" in 2011. The Historical Society's Board of Directors and the Castle Museum staff are ready to meet the challenge. In March 2011 we will open a permanent exhibit called *Geared for Production: The Story of Automotive Manufacturing in Saginaw County*. With the support of our members, volunteers and other friends, the Museum can continue to shine as one of Saginaw County's cultural jewels for many years to come.



having to leave the classroom. Our new "Castle Cam" uses the Internet to deliver virtual field trips and instructional events, such as the Museum's Lunch and Learn series.

With the opening of *History on the Move*, the Museum has been able to promote its archaeology program in a new way. Another exciting project that began this year also involved our archaeology team, led by Jeff Sommer.

In 1893 a fire started in what is known today as Ojibway Island. A strong wind quickly spread the fire to the east bank of the river. By the time it was brought under control more than 257 buildings had been destroyed. Recently, Jeff and his volunteers discovered what appears to be the remains of a home that was destroyed in the blaze. Plans are underway to continue digging at the site, which is located near St. Mary's of Michigan.



Our full-scale HO Model Railroad continues to be a big hit with visitors. Since the exhibit first opened, more than 19,000 people have come to see the railroad which boasts more than 1000 feet of track. This year, Museum volunteer Bill Falkenberg created an incredible

The Castle Museum again participated in *Jazz on Jefferson*, an annual celebration that continues to draw large crowds to the neighborhood for some great music and food. It's an excellent way to kick off the summer and our popular strawberry shortcake is always a hit.

Castle Celebrates Culture

This past year the Castle offered cultural celebrations throughout the summer that proved to be immensely popular - more than 600 people participated in these events. Some of the programs included making medicine pouches, learning about a famous African American jazz artist that grew up in Saginaw, learning how to make pesto and much more. The Museum plans to hold similar programs in the summer of 2011.



Other exhibits opened at the Museum, including a tribute to Saginaw County Boy Scouts who were celebrating their 100th anniversary.

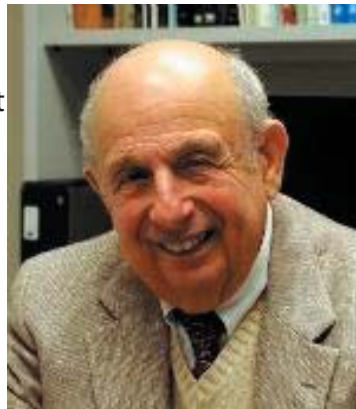
In July we received another artifact that would prove to be the cornerstone of our collection...the Saginaw Cyclecar. About 35 Saginaw Cyclecars were produced in 1914 - the only year of production - and we were excited to acquire one of the few Cyclecars remaining. The Valley Boat and Engine Company, once located at 721 S. Washington Avenue, produced these cars.

The Saginaw Voyageurs embarked on a week-long canoe trip on Lake Superior in the Upper Peninsula in July. The Museum's living history re-enactment program traces the routes of the original voyageurs and fur traders of the Great Lakes. Its purpose is to promote an understanding and appreciation for the role Saginaw played in the Great Lakes fur trade.

As the summer rolled along with cultural celebrations and historic tours, the date "August 3rd" loomed large on everyone's minds. The Museum staff, historical society members and other supporters were thrilled to see the millage pass with strong support from the entire county. This tax helps support the operating costs of the Castle and other county historical museums in Bridgeport, Chesaning, Frankenmuth and St. Charles.

Professor's Talk Draws Large Crowd

In August we continued paying tribute to local organizations celebrating milestones with an exhibit featuring the history of the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra which was celebrating its 75th anniversary. In addition, a new exhibit examined the Nazi book burnings and America's reaction. This thought-provoking display was organized by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



The co-curator of the exhibit, Guy Stern, lives in Michigan and gave an outstanding lecture about the exhibit in late September. More than 80 students at Saginaw Township's White Pine Middle School were able to see and hear Dr. Stern by using the Internet.

As the weather started to turn a bit colder, things were still heating up at the Castle Museum. Centennial Hall was filled with some of the Museum's most treasured artifacts. *Collected Treasures* proved to be a popular exhibit.

Plans were underway for our annual Holiday Party, which shattered previous records with almost 1,000 people who came to enjoy an afternoon of free holiday fun. Staff and volunteers also participated in the PRIDE parade Saturday morning where the Castle showcased its mobile museum, *History on the Move*.

We can't look back at 2010 without mentioning another success, which was the Museum's Lunch and Learn series held every Tuesday at Noon. There were many excellent programs this year, beginning in January when about 80 people came to hear about the history of Hoyt Park. The attendance at many of the Lunch and Learns was well above average and culminated



in a large crowd coming to see an outstanding documentary film about Saginaw native and World War II veteran, Howard Huebner. "Howard the Hero" was shown at the Castle on Tuesday, December 7th in honor of Pearl Harbor Day. The Museum was able to connect with Swan Valley High School so students there were able to see the film, too.

This time, however, the Museum utilized videoconferencing equipment it had recently purchased so that more students in Saginaw County could visit the Castle Museum without ever