

Welcome Home Celebration!

Saturday, April 10th
Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Come help us honor the men and women who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan

- FREE ADMISSION FOR ALL!
- FREE HOT DOGS!
- ENTERTAINMENT!
- FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

*Last Day of
The American
Soldier Exhibit!*

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Saginaw, MI

CASTLE COURIER

Newsletter of the Historical Society of Saginaw County

500 Federal Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
(989) 752-2861

www.castlemuseum.org



Board Member Delivers Stirring Speech at Meeting

Reminding us of our blessings and paying tribute to our veterans was the message that Board Member Dave Hall gave during his speech at the Historical Society of Saginaw County Annual Meeting on February 27th. We are printing his speech on Page Two of the Courier so that all our members can hear his powerful message.

Mr. Hall's remarks were in reference to our exhibit, **The American Soldier**, which runs through **Saturday, April 10th**. On April 10th we are having a Welcome Home Celebration from Noon to 3:00 p.m. for men and women who have recently returned from Iraq or Afghanistan. See the back page for more details.



David Hall at 2010 Annual Meeting

The Board of Directors elected officers at its March meeting and Mr. Hall was elected President for a one-year term. Also elected were: Michael Emmenecker as Vice President; Sarah Jury as Treasurer; and William Crane as Secretary. Robert Stroebel and Ken Willman were elected to the Executive Committee.

APRIL CALENDAR

Tuesday, April 6: **Lunch and Learn: Rick Thompson.** Mr. Thompson, a Saginaw police officer, recently returned from a tour in Afghanistan where he was part of a 36-person embedded training team to the Afghan National Army in Kabul. He will share pictures and stories of his experiences in Afghanistan. Coffee and dessert provided. Free with general admission. No admission charge for veterans. **Noon.**

Thursday, April 8: **Michigan Archaeological Society** meeting. Morley Room. **7:30 p.m.**

Tuesday, April 13: **Lunch and Learn: Ric Mixer.** Mr. Mixer will discuss his new book, *The Wheelmen*, which is based on harrowing true shipwreck stories. Mr. Mixer spent 17 years gathering information for his manuscript, including eyewitness interviews and underwater exploration of the shipwrecks. Dessert & beverage included. Free with general admission. **Noon.**

Tuesday, April 20: **Pages of History Book Club: *The Detroit Tigers, Fourth Edition*** by William M. Anderson. Dessert & beverage included. Free with general admission. **Noon.**

Tuesday, April 27: **Lunch and Learn: History on the Move.** Education Coordinator Heather Thompson will unveil this incredible tractor-trailer that has been transformed into a mobile classroom and museum. Our experienced educators will travel throughout Saginaw County visiting public, charter and private schools with historic artifacts and replicas. Come see this innovative traveling exhibit and learn how we will bring a piece of the Castle Museum to our region's youngsters. Dessert & beverage included. Free with general admission. **Noon.**



A poster from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Exhibit Opens This Month

The Castle Museum will host a tribute to rock and roll, with a collection of posters from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum in Cleveland. The posters provide a fun look back on fifty years of rock music.

Accompanying the posters will be items from the Museum's collection documenting the impact of rock and roll. The Fab Four will be present - well, not really - but we do have them in the form of four plastic models in their original packaging. We also will have several items from one of Saginaw's most popular music venues, Daniel's Den. When it opened in the mid-1960s, this teenage hotspot was the "place to be" and many musicians performed there during its heyday. In addition to local bands, Daniel's Den, which was located on State Street just east of Bay Road, also welcomed such stars as Sonny and Cher and Bob Seger.

The exhibit opens April 1 and runs through May 30. It is located in the Alcoves on the first floor of the Museum.

Museum Hours

Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

General Admission

Adults \$1.00
Children .50¢
Members FREE

The Historical Society of Saginaw County 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.



JOHN D. MERSHON

On April 28, 1898, the day after this photograph - shown above - was taken, the headlines in the Saginaw paper proclaimed: "Sailors' Farewell - Grand Demonstration of Citizens on the Departure of Saginaw Naval Reserves Yesterday - Mid Tears and Blessings." The article continues "Early in the morning people began to gather in front of the Armory and in little groups on the street corners, and by noon Genesee and Washington avenues for blocks were crowded."

This image is from a collection donated by Joseph Deneen documenting John D. Mershon's service in the Naval Reserves during the Spanish American War. Born in Saginaw in 1872, he volunteered for Naval duty in 1898 and served as the Boatswain's Mate on the USS Yosemite. His career included serving as Saginaw's postmaster from 1933 until 1948. He was postmaster when the Castle was renovated in 1937.

Our collection of materials relating to Mr. Mershon's career has been enriched by Mr. Deneen's donation of Mershon's service medals and the Boatswain's pipe he used during his time on the USS Yosemite. Our understanding of Mr. Mershon is further explained by other materials in our collection - letters he wrote during the renovation of the building, and a postcard he wrote to a former shipmate after a reunion. In short, our collection demonstrates that the sum is greater than the parts.

Front Entrance Project

Starting in April our front entrance will be closed so that workers can remove deteriorating concrete. You can look forward to an entrance that complements the Castle and engages visitors in our county's history before they even enter the museum.

During the project, visitors can enter the building using the Federal Avenue entrance near Warren, or use the rear entrance where our parking lot is located.

Dave Hall's Speech at the 2010 Annual Meeting

Back in the day, before many of you were born, there was an old blues number that I remember and liked. The words went something like this, "Hey everybody, let's have some fun. You live but once and when you're dead you're done. Let the good times roll."

The good times have rolled. We have seen them and we have enjoyed them. Those good times have passed on and we are having difficulty living during these challenging times. In spite of these times, if we are honest with ourselves and look critically at what we have and where we are and how we are doing, we have to say we are blessed. We are blessed as a people and we are blessed as a nation.

One of those blessings we have in this community is this Castle Museum. Here we are blessed to have the finest exhibits from different places at our disposal. The Castle Museum is a jewel to this community. Actually, it is a jewel to the county, the region, and even the state of Michigan. When we were trying to raise money for our endowment, we received donations from not only this area, but from the State and in a few instances we received donations from other states. We are truly blessed.

I could list for you the many exhibits that have been here during 2009. I won't bore you, but they were all impressive. Another impressive exhibit is The American Soldier exhibit that is here now. It is a pictorial exhibit. It has recorded pictures from the Civil War through today in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have an opportunity to see the battlefield from a safe haven - The Castle Museum. Each of these men and women are either veterans or will one day become a veteran, if they survive harm's way. Veterans have given us much to be thankful for. To wit:

***It is the Veteran, not the preacher,
who has given us freedom of religion.
It is the Veteran, not the reporter,
who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the Veteran, not the poet,
who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the Veteran, not the campus organizer,
who has given us the freedom to assemble.
It is the Veteran, not the lawyer,
who has given us the right to a fair trial.
It is the Veteran, not the politician,
who has given us the right to vote.***

I encourage you to see for yourself what these veterans went through in order for you to have the freedoms you enjoy today. These soldiers need your support and prayers while they are in harm's way.

There are also things we can do for ourselves. It we are to continue these fine exhibits so that our youth and others can better understand our history, we need to support the upcoming millage. It is my understanding that a house valued at \$100,000 pays only \$10.00 per year to support the Castle Museum. I am sure you will agree that we can continue to support this fine institution. I say continue because this is a continuation of the existing millage, at the same rate.

Permit me to close with the words of George Washington, "You took the good things for granted. Now you must earn them again. For every right that you cherish, you have a duty which you must fulfill. For every hope that you entertain, you have a task that you must perform. For every good that you wish to preserve, you will have to sacrifice your comfort and your ease. There is nothing for nothing anymore."

Veterans Honored at Museum Event

More than 250 people turned out for Veterans Day at the Castle Museum on Sunday, March 21st. Hot dogs, chips and cookies were given to all the visitors who came to see the American Soldier exhibit.

War re-enactors were on hand with their memorabilia, and several historical military vehicles, including a Vietnam War era gun truck, were lined up along Federal Avenue. Visitors were treated to a flag presentation by the Naval Sea Cadet Corps, one of whom gave a moving rendition of the National Anthem.

A big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped make this event such a great success!



castle connections

Marilyn Ludgin



Ask Marilyn Ludgin how long she has volunteered at the Castle Museum and she jokingly replies, "Forever." It's not been *that* long, but Marilyn has been a familiar face at the Museum since 1990 when she retired from the Saginaw Township schools as a librarian. Combining her love of research with her friendly personality has been a perfect fit at the Museum, where she has volunteered her time in the store, with exhibits and during special events.

She now spends most of her time helping to organize all the museum's books into a collection that can be easily accessed by associates.

"I like history, and the librarian in me enjoys helping to match people with the right materials," she said.

The lifelong Hemlock resident has had family in this area since the 1870s and enjoys traveling in her spare time. Thank you Marilyn for all that you do!

Got a Green Thumb? Handy Around the House?

Why not consider volunteering at the Castle Museum? We are always looking for people to help us maintain this beautiful building. With spring on its way, we would greatly appreciate any help in beautifying our grounds. Planting flowers, raking debris - anything at all that would help enhance the beauty of the Castle.

If you are more interested in helping inside the building, consider donating a few hours each week to assist our maintenance staff replace light bulbs, or other small jobs.

Finally, if there is anyone who has a CDL Class A license to drive a truck, and would be willing to help us drive our new tractor-trailer, *History on the Move*, we would be very grateful. This converted tractor-trailer is a mobile classroom that we plan to take to schools throughout the county.

If you are interested in any of these volunteer opportunities, please contact Deputy Director Tom Trombley at 752-2861, Ext. 304 or email him at ttrombley@castlemuseum.org Thank you!

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