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CASTLE COURIER

Newsletter of the Historical Society of Saginaw County
500 Federal Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
(989) 752-2861

www.castlemuseum.org



Let Your Motto Be Resistance

AFRICAN AMERICAN PORTRAITS

Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits is an intriguing display that highlights individuals whose passion, determination and talent played an influential role in shaping notions of race and status over the past 150 years. The exhibit opens on February 4 and will be at the Castle Museum through April 29, 2012.

Let Your Motto Be Resistance is from the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and features 69 photographs of famous African

Americans from all sectors of society.

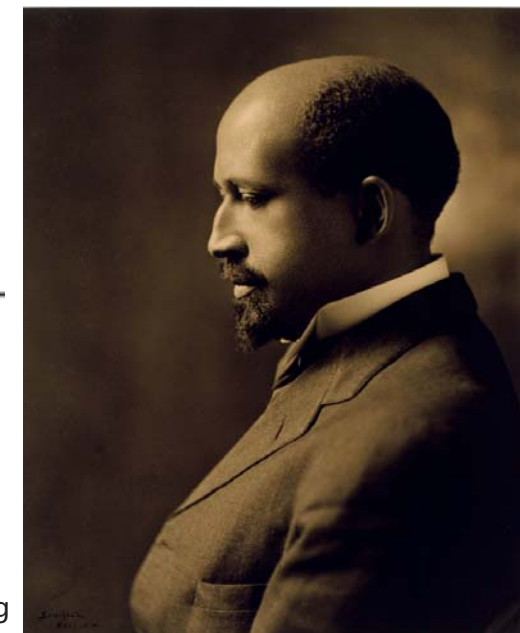
In addition, the Museum will open a companion display that focuses on local African Americans who have made a difference in our community. *Making an Impact: Portraits of Saginaw's African American Community* will include fascinating video interviews to accompany the photos and text panels.

The portrait subjects in *Let Your Motto Be Resistance* are a diverse group of individuals from Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Edmonia Lewis, to W.E.B. Du Bois, Lorraine Hansberry, and Wynton Marsalis.

The Castle was fortunate to receive two grants for the exhibit. One is from the Saginaw Community Foundation and its Senior Enrichment Fund. The other is from the Smithsonian Community Grant Program,

sponsored by the MetLife Foundation. The grants will be used to develop and implement public programming related to *Let Your Motto Be Resistance*. In addition, some of the funds were used to help develop the companion exhibit on local African Americans.

The Smithsonian Community Grant program, funded by MetLife Foundation and administered by SITES, is used to strengthen the connections between museums and their communities.



FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- Thursday, Feb. 2:** **MEETING:** Saginaw Valley Chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society. **7:30 p.m.**
- Tuesday, Feb. 7:** **LUNCH AND LEARN:** *The Saginaw Powerbike Story.* Wayne Bloomfield shares his family's connection to the Saginaw Powerbike. The Museum has a beautiful example on display in its automotive exhibit, courtesy of Mr. Bloomfield. Free with Museum admission. Dessert and beverage provided. **Noon.**
- Tuesday, Feb. 14:** **LUNCH AND LEARN:** *The First Ward Community Center: A History with a Focus, the 1960s.* First Ward President Sheilda Braddock will take guests through a brief history of The First Ward and also describe events that took place during the 1960s.
- Tuesday, Feb. 21:** **PAGES OF HISTORY BOOK CLUB:** The group will discuss "Death's Door: The Truth Behind Michigan's Largest Mass Murder" by Steve Lehto. This event is co-sponsored by the Public Libraries of Saginaw. Free with Museum admission. Dessert and beverage provided. **Noon.**
- Thursday, Feb. 23:** **EXHIBIT OPEN HOUSE FOR HSSC MEMBERS:** All HSSC members are invited to attend an open house from 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. to see our Smithsonian exhibit, *Let Your Motto Be Resistance*. Also on display is a local component featuring noteworthy African Americans who have made a difference in our community. Refreshments will be served.
- Tuesday, Feb. 28:** **LUNCH AND LEARN:** *Leap Year: The Myths Behind the Science.* Curator Sandy Schwan will explain the origins of leap year as well as some of the more popular myths associated with it. We especially encourage anyone with a leap year birthday or anniversary to attend and share stories. Free with Museum admission. Dessert and beverage provided. **Noon.**



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 serving 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.

Members Only Reception for New Exhibit

All Historical Society members are invited to a reception on Thursday, February 23 in honor of our new exhibits, *Let Your Motto Be Resistance* and *Making an Impact: Portraits of Saginaw's African American History*.

Information about both exhibits can be found on Page One of this newsletter.

The reception will take place from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. with light appetizers and wine being served.

For more information, please contact Ruth Mancina at 752-2861, Ext. 315.



Pictured above is Henry Marsh, Saginaw's first African American mayor. Mr. Marsh is one of 10 individuals recognized in the local exhibit. Photo courtesy of The Saginaw News

Congratulations to our 18,000th Visitor!



Pictured above with Museum President Ken Santa is HSSC member Floyd Feusse, who was the 18,000th visitor to the Museum in 2011.

"I love to bring my family and visitors to the Castle Museum," Floyd said. "In fact, today I brought my grandchildren here who are visiting from Nebraska." Thank you, Floyd, for your support! The Castle had its highest number of visitors ever in 2011 with 18,181.

Castle Museum joins the Great Michigan Read

The Great Michigan Read is a free, statewide humanities initiative inviting Michiganders to read and participate in book discussions and events in their hometowns.

This year's program features "Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights and Murder in the Jazz Age" by Detroit native Kevin Boyle.

The book is a masterful recounting of a landmark historical event, culminating in an epic legal battle that helped lay the foundation of the civil rights movement. In 1925, African American physician Ossian Sweet purchased a home in a white neighborhood in Detroit. Determined to protect his family and property, Sweet chose to defend himself from the mob organized to drive him out.

The Museum's Pages in Time Book Group, which is co-sponsored by the Public Libraries of Saginaw, will discuss the book on Tuesday, April 17th at Noon. Anyone is welcome to participate.

The Castle has 30 copies of the book available for loan to individuals interested in participating in the book group discussion. If you would like to borrow Arc of Justice, please contact Marketing Coordinator Ruth Mancina at 752-2861, Ext. 315.

The Artifact

A Carriage from the Saginaw Carriage Works

The museum's newest acquisition is a carriage made at J.P. Beck's Saginaw Carriage Works. Donated by Larry and Dawn Brethauer, the c. 1900 vehicle was transported to the museum by Mike's Wrecker Service. It was fitting - and somewhat ironic - that the truck that carried this treasure to the museum was designed to carry cars.

J.P. Beck's December 16, 1933 obituary noted: "After 15 years of hard work building up his carriage business, Mr. Beck saw the business and most of his savings wiped out by the automobile. Seeing that his trade was doomed, Mr. Beck traded a number of carriages for an automobile and started selling automobiles." The 1911 Saginaw directory indicates that he sold both cars and carriages, however within a couple of years he was firmly committed to the automobile and would again prosper.

The Saginaw Carriage Works was one of many carriage and wagon manufacturers in Saginaw. Considered one of the most successful, an 1892 description noted that "Only skilled workmen are employed and every piece of work is guaranteed, so that no more beautiful or finely finished carriages are made than the establishment turns out. Every employee is imbued with Mr. Beck's enthusiasm and pride."

The museum's carriage clearly demonstrates the caliber of the firm's work. It will join the 1914 Saginaw Cycle Car in the Museum lobby.



Mike's Wrecker Service delivers a carriage made in Saginaw around 1900 that was donated to the Museum by Larry and Dawn Brethauer. Photo Courtesy of The Saginaw News.

Happy Meal Toys Exhibit Held Over!

If you have not had a chance to see our exhibit on Happy Meal toys, the good news is that there is still time.

The exhibit was scheduled to close at the end of January, but because of its popularity, it will remain open through Sunday, March 11.

Kids of all ages will enjoy this collection of iconic toys as they take a trip down memory lane and search for some of their favorites.

The exhibit also highlights the third oldest McDonald's in Michigan, which is located in Saginaw Township at the corner of State Street and Center Road.



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