The Artifact

The Castle Museum’s Largest Artifact Celebrates a Birthday

“The main iron stair for the government building has been shipped from Chicago and is expected to arrive tomorrow when it will be put in place. The cornices and caps are all ready to be placed in position and the handsome center piece for the ceiling of the main iron stair is also completed.”

-Saginaw Evening News March 1, 1898

The Castle Building, the home of our museum and its namesake, is the largest artifact in the museum’s collection, and it is celebrating a milestone birthday – its 125th. Our research indicates that it opened to the public without ceremony or fanfare on July 3, 1898. Operations were simply transferred to the new facility.

When the building opened 125 years ago, the interior was profoundly different. As a result of the 1937 expansion, the only 1898 interior space retaining original detailing is the stairway in the west tower. The stairway was the focal point of the original public lobby which was in the space now occupied by the Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame. The original lobby featured a groin vaulted ceiling, tan brick walls, marble flooring and ornamental plasterwork. The execution of the plaster was described in an 1898 newspaper article:

J.H. Winn, of the firm of Kendall & Winn, of Chicago, who were awarded the contract for the plain and ornamental plastering of the government building, is in the city and has assumed charge of the work which will be pushed until completed.

The corps of skilled workmen will commence modeling at once for the ornamental staff work, leaf work and other ornaments. The lathing is about half done. It is all expanded metal, being made of steel. Mr. Winn promises some fine artistic work and says that photographs of the models will be sent to Washington for approval before being utilized.

The modeling will be done right in the building, all the material and necessary apparatus being on hand. About 12 men will be employed on this work.

-Saginaw Evening News, February 4, 1898

During the 1937 expansion, the staircase was closed to the public. Public access to the stairway was created, once again, in 1979 when the building was converted into a museum.

During the next few weeks, check the Castle Museum’s Facebook page for other glimpses into its early history and of course, come down and wish the Castle building a happy birthday.
Founded about 1936 by Finnish-born developer Victor Nurmi, Nurmi Builders constructed homes and commercial buildings located in Saginaw, Bay City and Midland. After Victor Nurmi moved to Florida in 1944, the company continued under the leadership of Saginaw architect Carl G. Schulwitz. Two upcoming guided tours will explore the work of this firm in Saginaw and Bay City.

The Nurmi Story: Adams Blvd. and Beyond  
-Saginaw-  
**Wednesday, August 9**  
1 p.m.

Explore the history of Nurmi Builders and how a wartime housing contract shaped a neighborhood.

To Register: Contact Tom Trombley at 989-752-2861 ext. 304 or ttrombley@castlemuseum.org.  
Registration Cost: free for current Castle Guard and higher members/$10 for non-members.

The Nurmi Model Home: Selling a Vision  
-Bay City-  
**Wednesday, August 16**  
1 p.m.

Explore the Nurmi Court Area and the impact of Nurmi Builders.

To Register: Contact Sam Fitzpatrick at 989-893-5733 or samf@bchsmuseum.org.  
Registration Cost: free for current BCHS members/$10 for non-members.

Although tours complement each other, they are independent; separate registration is required for each tour.

*Size of each tour is limited to 20 participants.

*Tours are walking tours on city sidewalks and no interiors are included.

*Tour distance is approximately 3/4 of a mile. Comfortable walking shoes and drinking water are strongly encouraged.
### EVENTS AT THE CASTLE

**JULY 5**
- **RIVETING ROCKETS FOR KIDS**
  - Presented by the Saginaw Public Libraries
  - **11 AM**

**JULY 6**
- **MUSEUM MINGLE**
  - **5-7 PM**

**JULY 11**
- **LUNCH & LEARN**
  - **12:00 PM**
  - Grow and Tell

**JULY 18**
- **PAGES OF HISTORY BOOK CLUB**
  - **12:00 PM**
  - *The Arsenal of Democracy* by A.J. Baime

**JULY 19**
- **MICHIGAN ANIMALS**
  - Presented by Bay City Visitor Center
  - **11 AM**

**JULY 20**
- **PRESCHOOL STORY TIME**
  - **10:30 AM**
  - Let's Go to the Zoo!

**JULY 22**
- **VICTORY BASH-1940S USO PARTY**
  - **7-9 PM**
  - Tickets Required

**JULY 25**
- **LUNCH & LEARN**
  - **12:00 PM**

**JULY 26**
- **KITE & PINWHEEL MAKING**
  - Presented by Delta College Learning Channel
  - **11 AM**

**JULY 27**
- **PRESCHOOL STORY TIME**
  - **10:30 AM**
  - Let’s Go to the Zoo!

**AUGUST 1-5**
- **SAGINAW COUNTY FAIR**

**AUGUST 2**
- **JUNIOR ARCHAEOLOGY**
  - **11 AM-1 PM**
  - SAGINAW PAVING BRICK LUNCH TOUR
  - **11:45 AM**

**AUGUST 3**
- **PRESCHOOL STORY TIME**
  - **10:30 AM**
  - Wild World of Bugs

**AUGUST 8**
- **LUNCH & LEARN**
  - **12:00 PM**
  - Dr. Mitchell Hall, *The War in Vietnam*

**AUGUST 9**
- **KAMISHIBAI STORYTELLING**
  - Presented by the Saginaw Public Libraries
  - **11:00 AM-1 PM**
  - WIRT ROWLAND ARCHITECTURE LUNCH TOUR
  - **11:45 AM**
  - THE NURMI STORY TOUR
  - **1 PM**
  - Pre-Registration Required

**AUGUST 15**
- **PAGES OF HISTORY BOOK CLUB**
  - **12:00 PM**
  - August Snow by Stephen Mack Jones

**AUGUST 16**
- **THE NURMI MODEL TOUR**
  - **1 PM**
  - Pre-Registration Required

**AUGUST 17**
- **PRESCHOOL STORY TIME**
  - **10:30 AM**
  - Wild World of Bugs

**AUGUST 18-20**
- **MID MICHIGAN OLD GAS TRACTOR ASSOCIATION**
  - Oakley, Michigan

**AUGUST 22**
- **LUNCH & LEARN**
  - **12:00 PM**
  - Gerardo Gonzalez, “The History of Saginaw St. Joseph Parish”

*In collaboration with Hoyt Library*
**LUNCHTIME WALKING TOURS**  
7/26, 8/2 & 8/9  
11:45 a.m.

In conjunction with the SVRC Marketplace, the Castle Museum is offering three lunchtime walking tours. The tours begin in the historic lobby of the SVRC Marketplace at 11:45 a.m. Each tour will last approximately 30 minutes and require 5-8 blocks of walking on city sidewalks. Tours are free. No registration required. For details scan the code:

**SPECIAL LUNCH & LEARN—GROW AND TELL!**  
July 11  
Noon–1 p.m.

A special Lunch & Learn where YOU share, “open-mic” style, about your garden. Arrive early and sign up for a chance to speak for 3 minutes about your garden or garden memories. Do you have prize-worthy vegetables? A gorgeous riot of colorful blooms? A memory of working the earth alongside your grandparents? We want to hear about it. Visual aides are welcome!

**SAGINAW COUNTY FAIR**  
August 1–5

The Saginaw County Fair runs from August 1-5, and the Castle Museum will have a booth in the main exhibit barn. We are looking for volunteers to talk with people about the museum at our booth. If interested, please contact Education Coordinator Kristi Furtaw at kfurtaw@castlemuseum.org or 989-752-2861 ext 311.

This year fair-goers will also have the opportunity to hear history presentations from several different county historical organizations, including the Castle Museum. Be sure to check out the fair website for the final schedule:  
https://www.saginawcountyfair.org/

**MID MICHIGAN OLD GAS TRACTOR ASSOCIATION SHOW**  
AUGUST 18–20

We are looking for volunteers to talk with people about the museum at the Mid Michigan Old Gas Tractor Association (MMOGTA) Show in Oakley. The show is August 18-20. Our display is set up in the large barn inside of the main entrance gate.

We are looking for morning and afternoon shift volunteers for the event each day from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. or 2 p.m.-5 p.m.

If you are interested in signing up or would like more information, please contact Sandy Schwan at 989-752-2861 ext. 309.
Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2023

The Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame has officially announced who the Lifetime Voting Membership elected as the Class of 2023:

In the male athlete category:
Jason Richardson, basketball (1999 Arthur Hill, MSU, NBA) and Alfonso Boone, football (1994 Arthur Hill, NFL)

This year, the female athlete was made its own category:
“Tori” Jankoska, basketball (2013 Freeland, MSU, WNBA) and Jenni (Rasmussen) Kammer, softball (1999 Swan Valley, CMU)

The coach elected this year is Larry Graf who coached softball at Hemlock High School for many years.

Hugh Bernreuter is our contributor for all he has done as a sportswriter for The Saginaw News.

From the veteran’s category:
Ken Tolfree, football (1975 Merrill, SVSU) and Don Voorheis, track, (1959 Frankenmuth, MSU)

Lastly, the back-to-back girls basketball state champions from Nouvel Catholic Central were selected in the team category. They were the 2006 and 2008 MHSAA champions. (The MHSAA moved girls basketball to winter after the 2006-07 school year).

Our banquet to celebrate their induction will be on Sunday, November 5th.

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This year Jazz on Jefferson, taking place on Wednesday, June 7, will celebrate two Saginaw anniversaries: the 160th anniversary of the establishment of the Goodridge Brothers’ East Saginaw Studio and the 99th anniversary of the naming of the peony as Saginaw’s official city flower.

Although plans are still being finalized, the Goodridge celebration will include a Goodridge Brothers’ selfie-station and a South Jefferson Avenue tour based on their photographs.

To commemorate the anniversary of the naming of Saginaw’s official city flower, many sites will be offering peony-plant door prizes. Also, weather permitting, we will have a few peonies in bloom. (The celebration of Saginaw’s city flower will continue beyond Jazz on Jefferson at the Saginaw Art and Garden Festival on Wednesday, June 14.)

In addition, the headliner for this year’s Jazz on Jefferson is the Lavel Jackson Band, which will perform at First Congregational Church at 7:30 p.m. that evening. Lavel Jackson is known for his R&B and soul music.
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS: FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

Opening July 14

A new exhibit celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of Friday Night Live in Downtown Saginaw opens Friday, July 14, 2023