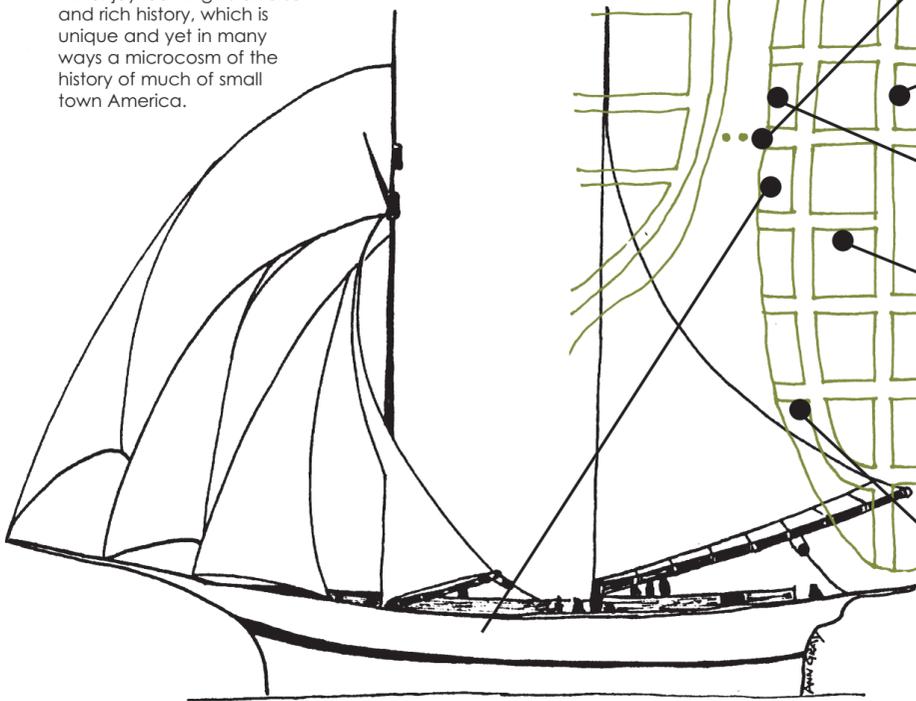


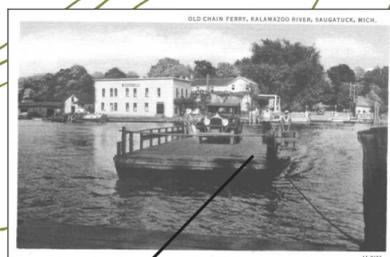
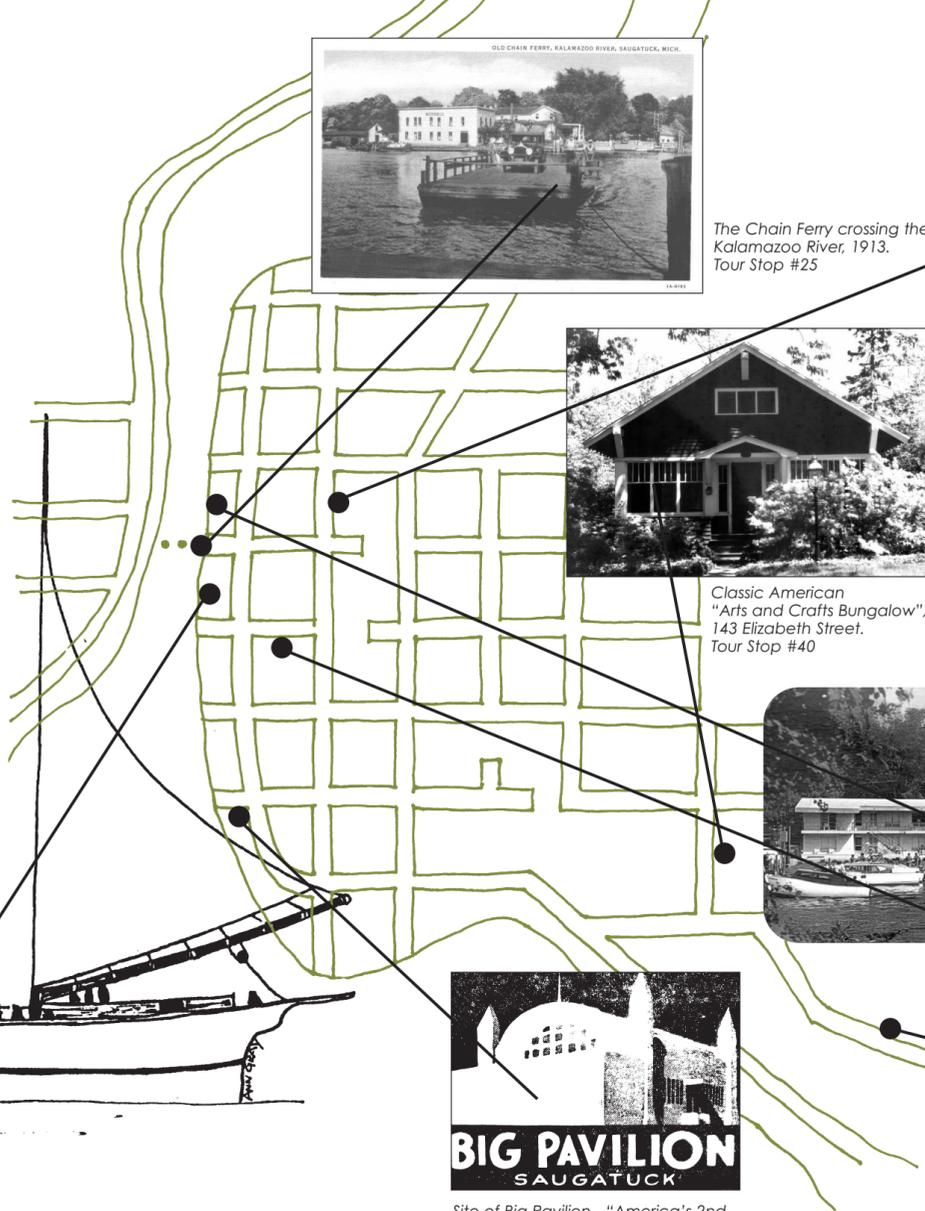
a tour of Saugatuck

walking around and soaking up history

Reading buildings is a way of connecting with our past. By taking the Saugatuck Walking Tour, we hope you will enjoy learning its diverse and rich history, which is unique and yet in many ways a microcosm of the history of much of small town America.



The "L. B. Coates", launched in 1874, was built at a local shipyard for the Saugatuck Lumber Co. by John Batiste Martel, who built the house at Tour Stop #36.



The Chain Ferry crossing the Kalamazoo River, 1913. Tour Stop #25



Classic American "Arts and Crafts Bungalow", 143 Elizabeth Street. Tour Stop #40



A drawing of a classic Greek Revival house. See tour stop #20. Timothy Coats House, 1852.



"1960's Modern" - Ship "N Shore" "Boatel," 528 Water Street. Tour Stop #24



Site of Big Pavilion - "America's 2nd Largest Dance Hall" (burned, 1960). Tour Stop #30



1883 "plan book" Gothic Revival house. Tour Stop #43



Christian Science Society at Village Square. Tour Stop #13

1830-1865	1865 - 1880	1880 - 1900	1900 - 1920	1920 - 1940	1940
<p>First lighthouse, 1852</p> <p>Michigan statehood, 1837</p> <p>Saugatuck founded, 1830</p> <p>Land Rush in Michigan, 1830s-1840s</p>	<p>First church in Saugatuck, 1861</p> <p>American Civil War, 1861-65</p> <p>First hotel built, 1852</p> <p>34 million feet of lumber exported from Saugatuck, 1870</p> <p>Great fires in Chicago and West Michigan, 1871</p>	<p>Douglas founded, 1870</p> <p>Cottage building boom begins, 1895</p> <p>Large schooners and steam boats built in Saugatuck, 1870-1900</p> <p>135,000 peach trees in Douglas and Saugatuck, 1884</p> <p>Saugatuck's first telephone, 1896</p> <p>Inter-Urban train comes to Saugatuck, 1899</p>	<p>New harbor channel cut, 1906</p> <p>World War I, 1914-1918</p> <p>Butler St. paved for the first time, 1916</p> <p>Big Pavilion dance hall opens, 1909</p> <p>Commercial fishing boom in Saugatuck</p> <p>Ox-bow School of Art begins, 1913</p> <p>Big steam ship era begins - bringing many tourists, 1910</p>	<p>Douglas Basket Factory burns, 1927</p> <p>Oval Beach opens, 1936</p> <p>World War II, 1939-1945</p> <p>Village Hall remodeled, 1924</p> <p>Great Depression, 1929-1941</p> <p>Woman's Club auditorium built, 1935</p> <p>War ends, 1945</p> <p>Red Barn Theater established, 1951</p>	<p>Old Lighthouse destroyed, 1956</p> <p>Big Pavilion burns, 1960</p> <p>First marina, 1952</p> <p>Old Pump House restored, 1975</p>

The Pioneer Era

Before 1830, the Saugatuck area and most of Allegan County were inhabited solely by the Pottawatome Indian tribe. European incursion into the area was limited to the French Voyageurs who trapped for furs and traded with the Indians. The earliest settlers were people who came to work and make their fortunes primarily from the area's natural resources—pine trees for lumber and shingles, hemlock trees to use in tanning hides, land speculation, fishing, and, later, fruit growing. The first settler, William Butler, arrived with his wife at the mouth of the Kalamazoo River in 1830. He platted a village on the small level area, known as "the flats", at the foot of a clay bluff. By the 1850s, Saugatuck was flourishing, mainly by selling lumber products to Chicago. Most of the public spaces were taverns and boarding houses. Generally most buildings during the early period were extremely modest or primitive cabins and many people lived in other people's homes, boarding houses, or hotels. Virtually everything was built on the flats. But by the 1850s, Saugatuck began to take on a cultivated look. The prevailing architectural style was Greek Revival—popular because it was simple to build, affordable yet architecturally stylish.

The Lumber Era

This was the golden age of building in Saugatuck. The economy was booming. Steamboat service between Chicago and Saugatuck started in 1867. Eight lumber mills were going full-blast to meet growing urban needs, especially Chicago's after the Chicago fire of 1871, and the population increased three-fold. New buildings to meet this population increase were built primarily "on the hill," away from the flats, which had become a noisy, rowdy, congested area of workers, sailors, and bars. Also during this period, the first public spaces were built: churches, the city hall, and fraternal order lodges. The Italianate style in building became popular during this period.

The Shipbuilding and Fruit Growing Era

By 1880, the lumber boom was over after round-the-clock clearcutting and milling had finished off Michigan's famous white pines. The Village of Singapore, near the mouth of the river, folded and many other area mills closed down. Their owners and workers moved on to find new fortunes elsewhere. But as old industries were dying, new industries were starting. Fruit growing replaced lumber as the area's premier natural resource—and Michigan peaches were known as "Michigan Gold" in Chicago. By 1884, there were 134,812 trees under cultivation in Saugatuck, Douglas, and the surrounding area, producing nearly a quarter of all the peaches grown in Michigan. Boat building and shipping also expanded during the period. In 1871, 672 vessels entered the port of Saugatuck. More than 200 vessels were built here between 1880 and 1910. With this influx of new capital and new people, the town grew and more stylish homes were built. Many were built by ship captains or people involved in boat building. Many of these homes still stand, but the best known and most stylish of these captain's houses was unfortunately torn down in 1967 to make way for a parking lot.

The Back to Nature Era

By the end of the 19th century, Saugatuck and the surrounding area were starting to see hard times. The years between 1895 and 1920 saw the demise of the boat building industry and most of the vast peach orchards. With this came a substantial decrease in population. By 1920, Saugatuck's population had fallen below that of 1870. But once again, luck would provide Saugatuck with a new source of income which, although seasonal, has persisted to the present day—tourism. By 1900, Americans had discovered leisure and tourism, including the "get-away-from-it-all" cottage, in a big way and Saugatuck was benefiting from this new trend. The lake, river, and forest, which had previously been viewed as dangers to be traversed or something to be exploited, now came to be viewed by city folks as objects of beauty and as moral and spiritual antidotes as well. During this period, a new architectural style, Arts & Crafts became popular, reflecting a more friendly and more spiritual view of nature—as it stressed simplicity of form, honesty of materials, the virtue of hand craftsmanship, and a respect for the natural environment.

The Big Pavilion Era

In the aftermath of WWI, while much of America was in a boom period, small town Michigan was not. Saugatuck's economic base, with the exception of seasonal tourism, had all but disappeared. The upside of this story for us today is that this slow economy meant Saugatuck's old-fashioned, quaint character remained intact. By 1920 Saugatuck was looking a bit shabby and out of date. To increase its tourist business and attract new seasonal residents, Saugatuck paved its streets for the first time and prettied itself up by transforming many of its existing buildings with Colonial Revival facelifts, a style which was very popular in America after WWI. In doing this, it benefited from the local summer presence of architects of national stature such as Thomas Eddy Talmadge, Robert Spencer, George Hellmuth, and George Maher, as well as local architect Carl Hoerman. New construction also reflected this Colonial Revival trend, with the Arts & Crafts movement continuing to have a strong presence.

Post WWII to the Present

During these years, Saugatuck's image as a quaint resort community became solidified. During the 1950s and 1960s, most of the new construction to house the increasing flow of tourists occurred in Douglas and the surrounding township since Saugatuck was already quite built-up. These buildings were pretty typical of modern construction seen everywhere in suburban America. But in the 1970s, Saugatuck began to see a new wave of both tourists and part-time residents who had more money to spend. Many of these people were drawn not just to the water or the woods, but by a desire for "real" and "genuine" experiences within "natural" or "historic" environments. This has had a major impact, both on the preservation of the existing built and natural environment of the area, but also in the construction of new homes which, for the most part, are compatible with the surrounding streetscape in their size, scale, and use of materials.

Tour 1: The Flats

1 Corner of Butler and Culver. Interurban Train Station (1899) The tourist appeal of Saugatuck led to an electric railroad line built to carry tourists between Grand Rapids, Holland, and Saugatuck. It remained in operation until 1927. The little station served one of the rural stops and was moved here to serve as a tourist information station.



5 202 Butler. Union Hotel (1864) While this building may look more Italianate than Greek Revival from the street, if you look at the north side of the building you will see a classic Greek Revival gable with corner eave returns. The building has housed a variety of establishments including a hotel, billiard parlor, grocery store, a meat market, and now a restaurant.

6 247 Butler. Captain Rogers House (1881-97) Rogers built many large steamboats and owned shipping warehouses and piers as well. This building later was a boarding house for tourists. The shopfronts are recent.



7 252 Butler. Walz' Meat Market (1889) Built as a meat market, the town's first library was located on the second floor of this Italianate Commercial structure. In the 1940s and 1950s it housed a tavern called the Log Cabin.

2 SW Corner of Butler and Culver Streets. Indian Monument. During the construction of the Village Hall in the late 1880s, old Indian burial grounds were discovered in this area.

3 102 Butler. Village Hall (1880 and 1924) Originally built as a combination fire station and village hall in the Italianate style, the building received a new Colonial Revival front designed by Carl Hoerman in 1924. The building currently houses the Saugatuck city government.



Note the historical marker for the lost city of Singapore in front of the building.

4 152 Butler. The Landmark Building (1878) Claimed at the time to be the crowning glory of Saugatuck and an "ornament to the village", this Italianate Commercial structure was Saugatuck's first bank, a public hall, and quarters for both the Masonic Hall and the Odd Fellows. Susan B. Anthony, the temperance leader, spoke here to a packed house in 1879.

8 127 Hoffman. Dr. Kreager's House (1844, 1890 and later) The rear section of this structure is possibly the oldest existing structure in the village—the Plummer-Coates grocery and drug store built in 1844. In 1890, a Queen Anne house was built in front of the structure, totally obscuring it. Later, it was the residence of Dr. H.E. Kreager who was Village President 1924-1933.



Although not fully documented, this building is said to have been the bank building in a nearby Singapore in 1837. After the lumber mill and village folded, the building was moved down the frozen ice of the river to H.D. Moore's Park House property as a general store. It was finally moved to the current site before 1890 where it became a grocery store.

9 Hoffman, off Butler. Saugatuck Woman's Club (1933) Designed by well known Chicago architect Thomas Eddy Tallmadge in a manner reminiscent of his work in the re-design of Colonial Williamsburg Virginia, the building reflected the social influence of the village's female population. The white Greek Revival cottage that fronts the building on Butler St. was constructed by a local tanner in the 1860s.

12 326 Butler. Dr. Walker's Building (1908) The front half of this Italianate Commercial building was rented to commercial establishments, while the rear half was the office of Dr. Walker, who practiced medicine in Saugatuck from 1895 until 1943.

13 12 Main. Christian Science Society (1925) and Village Square. The Christian Science Society of Saugatuck was established in 1912 and met in various buildings until it built this Colonial Revival style church in 1925. The church faces the Village Square which includes a public restroom, a playground, and a number of interesting sculptures, including one dedicated to the memory of Burr Tillstrom. Saugatuck resident and the creator of the Kukla, Fran, and Ollie TV show. Nearby is a ship's cannon from the 1840s - brought to Saugatuck about the time of the Civil War. Now fired only on special occasions.



10 306 Butler. The Heath Building (1907) This Italianate Commercial structure, built from locally produced brick, has over the years housed the Bird Drugstore, a soda shop, the district library, a saloon, and retail shops on the ground floor. At one time, the second floor was a hotel.

11 317 Butler. Singapore Bank Building (1890 dating back to 1837.

14 428 Butler. Maplewood Hotel (1860) Originally a simple general store, this structure was redesigned in the Colonial Revival manner with a new front in 1923 by architect George W. Maher. It was part



of a village-wide effort to create a more picturesque village.

15 439 Butler. Wilkin's Hardware Store (1904) Founded in 1865 as Nies, and later Koning's, hardware store, this Italianate Commercial building was built after the old one was destroyed by fire, and is now Saugatuck's oldest continuous retail business. Recent additions to the rear are fitting to the original building in scale and style.



16 447 Butler. Koning House (1904) Built by the owner of the hardware store next door, this house, which was ordered from the Sears Catalogue, is an example of the Queen Anne style of architecture that was becoming popular in the Midwest.



17 246 Mary. Fursman House (1855 and 1927) Originally the village's first school and meeting house. In 1927, the owner, Frederick Fursman, Director of the Oxbow School of Art, had the facade redone in the Colonial Revival style by architect Thomas Eddy Tallmadge.

18 507 Butler. Koning-Wiley House (ca 1922, with a 1999 addition to side) This house has a fashionable arched porch pediment and picture window. Comparing this house of Ira Koning to that of his father at 447 Butler illustrates how much house fashion changed between 1904 and the 1920s.



19 510 Butler. Wickwood Inn (1940) Built as a home and apartment house, this Colonial Revival building was one of the more fashionable new structures of the village at the time. Now a B&B.

20 521 Butler. Timothy Coates House (1852) This house was built for one of the keepers of the Saugatuck Lighthouse. The building is an excellent example of the local Greek Revival form. The porch was added later.

21 546 Butler. Goldsmith House (1938-39) Jean Goldsmith, a Detroit public school teacher and one of the founders of the Saugatuck Arts Club designed this cottage for herself in a simplified "International" style.

22 607 Butler. Judson-Heath House (1858) This Greek Revival house was the largest house in the village at the time. Elnathan Judson was a land speculator and used the house as his home and a boarding house for local mill workers. It is constructed in the pre-balloon frame system called post and frame construction.



23 620 Butler. Devine House (1927) This is a classic example of a Dutch Colonial house.

24 528 Water. Ship 'N Shore Motel-Boatel (1960) The largest motel in the area at the time it was built, its many boat docks reflected the rise of pleasure boat ownership as much as that of the automobile. With its long, low gable roof and its use of concrete block, it is the luxury motel version of the ranch house being constructed all over America at the time.

25 Foot of Mary St. and the River. Chain Ferry (1838) A wooden drawbridge originally crossed the river at this point. It was replaced by a wooden chain ferry that began operations in 1838. The present ferry was built in 1965 and is the only hand-cranked chain ferry in the United States. In years past, the ferry carried wagons, horses, and automobiles.

During the season, take the chain ferry to continue with the walking tour across the river

26 Wicks Park/Bandstand. Britain Shipyards (1886) This was the site of one of the many shipyards in which over 200 large and small boats were built in Saugatuck between 1840 and 1915—including steamers, barges, and tugs. The shipyards closed with the switch of local passenger and fruit transport from ship to railroad. In later years, this site was used for a roller skating pavilion.



27 321 Water. Kleeman's Saloon (ca. 1860) A combination residence and tavern, this Greek Revival building served sailors and dockworkers and had a somewhat tarnished reputation in this early period when the waterfront was rather rough and loud.

28 231 Water. Taylor/Wilcox House (1910) This is a classic Craftsman Bungalow inside and out. Lead glass and mahogany wood trim enhance the well-preserved interior.



29 106 Mason. Dole House -White House Inn (1886) Built by Captain James Dole, a ship captain, this Italianate building became a boarding house/hotel at the turn of the century. Later the porch was closed in for a shop. Note the large brackets at the roof line and the fine window trim.



30 SW Corner of Water and Mason. Site of The Big Pavilion (1909) Known as the "Brightest Spot on the Great Lakes", and billed as the second largest dance floor in America, the Big Pavilion catered to as many as a thousand people a day in its heyday. The building measured 105 x 200 feet (2/3 of a football field) and was the first building in the area to have electric lights. It was destroyed by a fire in 1960 and is now a parking lot.

31 Water St. next to Village Hall. Sailor Burial Spot, 1843 Mutiny. During a terrible storm on Lake Michigan in 1843 the crew of the ship Milwaukee mutinied and killed the captain. The ship broke up in the storm and sank. Eleven crewmembers are buried near an oak tree at rear of this site.



32 227 Griffith. Twin Oaks (1860) John Henry, a lumber mill owner who later became a politician, built this Folk Victorian house from parts of three different homes. In the early years, the house served as a boarding house for his workers as well as the residence for his family.

33 312 Hoffman. Harry Moore House (1863) Moore was a lumberman with extensive pine and hemlock forests and a large mill in nearby Douglas. This Greek Revival building has simplified Gothic details—such as the bracket top over the large first floor window.

34 336 Hoffman. Heath-Edgcomb House (ca.1930) This Dutch Colonial house, the "Verona" model, was ordered from the Sears 1926 catalogue. It was sent to Saugatuck by railroad. Its cost was \$4,347, about 15 times the price of a Ford Model T at that time.



35 252 Grand. All Saints Episcopal (1874) Influenced by the gothic revival style that was popular in the Episcopal church at the time, it is one of the finest Carpenter Gothic churches in Michigan. Designed by Detroit architect Gordon Lloyd, with a fine addition by local painter and architect Carl Hoerman.



36 345 Grand. Martel House (1884) This Italianate structure was built by John Baptiste Martel who owned a large boat-building yard at the riverfront. Note the fancy exterior wood work carried out by ship carpenters.

As you continue walking down Main and cross St. Joseph street, look to your left and you will see the largest oak tree in Allegan County.

37 404 Griffith. Crawford-Hungerford House (1888) This house is formed of two "pieces." The main part was later connected to a smaller house which the owner moved from elsewhere in Saugatuck. Like other houses on this street, it was built by a better off resident who wanted to escape from the noise and ruckus of the riverfront—but still be able to see the river.

38 446 Griffith. Pond-Winslow House (1868) When Mr. Pond built this Italianate house soon after the Civil War he had a view of the river. Typical of many area houses, this house has had numerous additions and alterations over the years, but it retains its basic footprint and scale. The Colonial Revival porch was added around 1935.

39 439 Griffith. Captain Wilson's House (1880). Wilson was a shipbuilder and ship captain. This Italianate house was famous for its fine interior woodworking. The structure's clapboard exterior was covered with stucco at some later time.

40 143 Elizabeth. Bird-Shafer House (1918) A perfect example of a carefully restored Craftsman Bungalow. The original owner of this house was reportedly the founder of the blueberry industry in western Michigan. The azaleas at the front of the house may be the largest and oldest this far north in Michigan.

41 633 Allegan. Kemah House (1906 and 1928) Originally designed by Thomas Eddy Tallmadge as an Arts and Crafts cottage, the building was expanded and remodeled into a house by local artist Carl Hoerman for a member of the Chicago Board of Trade. The interior rooms are a mix of Prairie Style and Art Nouveau tiles, stained glass, light fixtures, and carved wood.



42 621 Pleasant. Hoerman Home and Studio (1910) The Bavarian-born artist and architect created this distinctive Arts & Crafts house for himself.

43 758 Pleasant. Rice Taylor House (1873) This Gothic Revival home was built by the founding pastor of All Saints Episcopal, most likely from a design from Andrew Jackson Downing's plan book of residences that was popular at the time.

44 765 Allegan. Samuel Johnson House (1868) Samuel Johnson, a prosperous merchant, built this Italianate building, which was one of the largest and most expensive houses built in Saugatuck in its day. Later became the "Frolic Inn" when the local economy began to depend on providing tourist accommodation.

Tour 4: Across the River

45 102 Bliss. Allalhee Lodge (1892) Built for a U.S. Senator, this Arts and Crafts cottage has three levels of porch to catch the breezes. During the 1960s to 80s this cottage was known as High Camp.



46 115 Van Dalson. Bliss Cottage (ca. 1896) Mrs. Bliss built one of the earliest purpose-built cottages in the area. Originally of a folk-Victorian style, with its main living floor being the second floor, it takes advantage of the Kalamazoo River views.

47 127 Van Dalson. Alibi Cottage (1898) Here is a typical "Michigan cottage" in a completely original state with a center room surrounded by porches.

48 128 Van Dalson. Belle River (1897, remodeled 1990, Arts & Crafts cottage style) This early cottage was a boarding house called Gaiety Inn from 1923 to 1941 and was frequented by well known Chicago mobsters. It is now a private residence.



49 735 Park. The Pump House - Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society Museum (1904/1910) This Arts & Crafts-Craftsman style building housed Saugatuck's first municipal water system and first electric power generating station. Since 1993, the City has leased the building to the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society for use as the area's indoor-outdoor historical museum. The entrance pavilion was built in 2001.



50 Park St. opposite the Pump House. Mt. Baldhead Park (1885) The highest sand dune in the area was named Mr. Baldhead by early settlers because there was no vegetation at the top. Trees were planted to stabilize the dune in the 1930s. The Pottawatome Indians conducted their spring ritual ceremonies on the top of Mr. Baldhead until the late 1800s. In 1956, a radar dome was erected as part of the nation's Strategic Air Defense early warning system. It was shut down and abandoned in 1968. Walk up the 282 stairs for a beautiful view of the area.



TO LAKE MICHIGAN

ACROSS THE RIVER

TO OVAL BEACH

START HERE



- The Pioneer Era
- The Lumber Era
- The Shipbuilding and Fruit Growing Era
- The Back to Nature Era
- The Big Pavilion Era
- Post WWII to the Present

For more information on how to identify the various architectural styles found in historic Saugatuck, the pamphlet "What Style Is It?" and the book *Raising the Roof: The Buildings and Architecture of Saugatuck-Douglas* are available at the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Museum.

For more information on Saugatuck's history, visit <http://www.sdhhistory.com>

Guided walking tours are available during the summer. See the Information Booth (Stop #1) for details.

This walking tour was written and designed by the Heritage Preservation Committee of Saugatuck Douglas Historical Society, a nonprofit group dedicated to enabling the community to connect to and understand its past and use its history to shape its future and preserve its quality of life.

Visit the Saugatuck Douglas Historical Museum on the west bank of the Kalamazoo River opposite Mt. Baldhead Park. See # 49 on the map.

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For information on lodging, call 269 / 857-1702, or visit www.saugatuck.com.

Design / Judy Hillman • Photography / Ron Hirsch

AROUND PLEASANT

Don't miss the latest exhibit at the award-winning Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Museum

Tour Stop #49 open Memorial Day through October