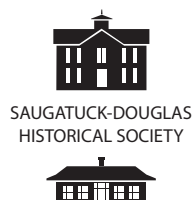
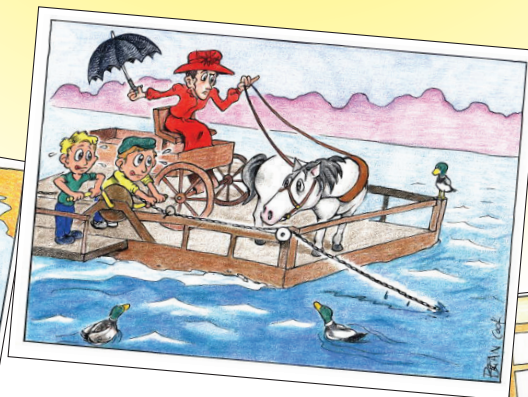
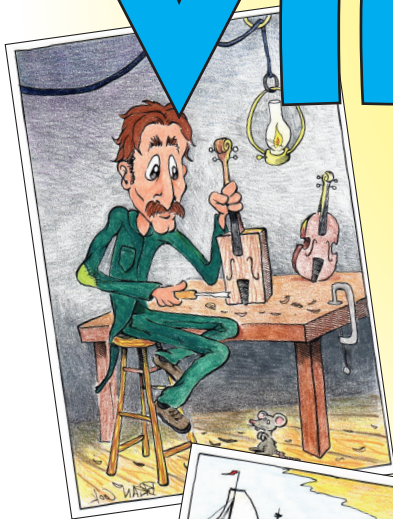


TALES of the VILLAGES

The Saugatuck-Douglas
Coloring and Activity Book
with 12 History Hunts





While in town, visit the

Saugatuck-Douglas History Museum

735 Park Street, Saugatuck, MI 49453 • 269-857-7900
On the west bank of the Kalamazoo River at the foot of Mt. Baldhead. Take the chain ferry from Saugatuck.

From Memorial Day to Labor Day, open every day from noon to 4:00 pm. In September and October, open Saturday and Sunday from noon to 4:00 pm



You might also enjoy the

Old School House History Center Back in Time Pathway Garden "Rowing them Safely Home" Lifeboat Exhibit

130 Center Street, Douglas, MI 49406 • 269-857-5751

Both venues operated by the non-profit



Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society

P.O. Box 617, Douglas, MI 49406 • 269-857-5751
www.SDHistoricalSociety.org

This book was inspired by Dr. James Schmiechen's text for the Saugatuck-Douglas History Museum exhibition "Tales of the Villages: A Saugatuck-Douglas Storybook" and includes the original illustrations by Brian Cook.

Activities supported by a grant from the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs (MCACA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)



Cursive Handwriting



Cursive Handwriting

Cursive is a flowing style of handwriting that connects the letters within each word. If you never learned how to write in cursive, try to write your name here.

Handwriting practice lines for writing a name in cursive.

Crossing the River

Crossing the River

A long time ago, the only way to cross the Kalamazoo River was in a little boat or a canoe. This was dangerous. A canoe is easy to tip over or the river could push a rowboat out into the lake. In the winter, the river was covered with ice.

Around 1833, a bridge was built at Mary Street to make crossing easier. But every spring lumberjacks cut down trees and pushed the logs into the river. The logs floated downstream to the saw mills in Saugatuck and Douglas. On the way, the logs hit the bridge and it collapsed into the river.

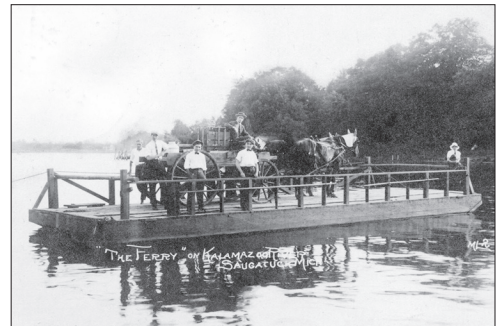
What to do? The solution was a chain ferry. The ferry was a rectangular, flat boat called a scow. It was large enough to hold a wagon and team of horses. An underwater chain connected the ferry to both sides of the river. The chain passed through a hand-cranked winch that pulled the ferry from one side of the river to the other. The chain was very long so after the ferry passed, the chain sank to the bottom of the river.

The captain of the ferry was called the ferryman. A boy called the cranker turned the wench to pull the ferry back and forth. The trip originally cost 5 cents.

Today many bridges cross the Kalamazoo River. But the chain ferry is still here. The current ferry, named the Diane, is smaller so it only carries people and bicycles across the river. It is one of the last hand-operated chain ferries in the United States and a very nice way to see the river on a summer day.



In winter, ferryman Jay Myers used a pole to move along a channel cut in the frozen river.



Plenty of room for men, horses and a wagon



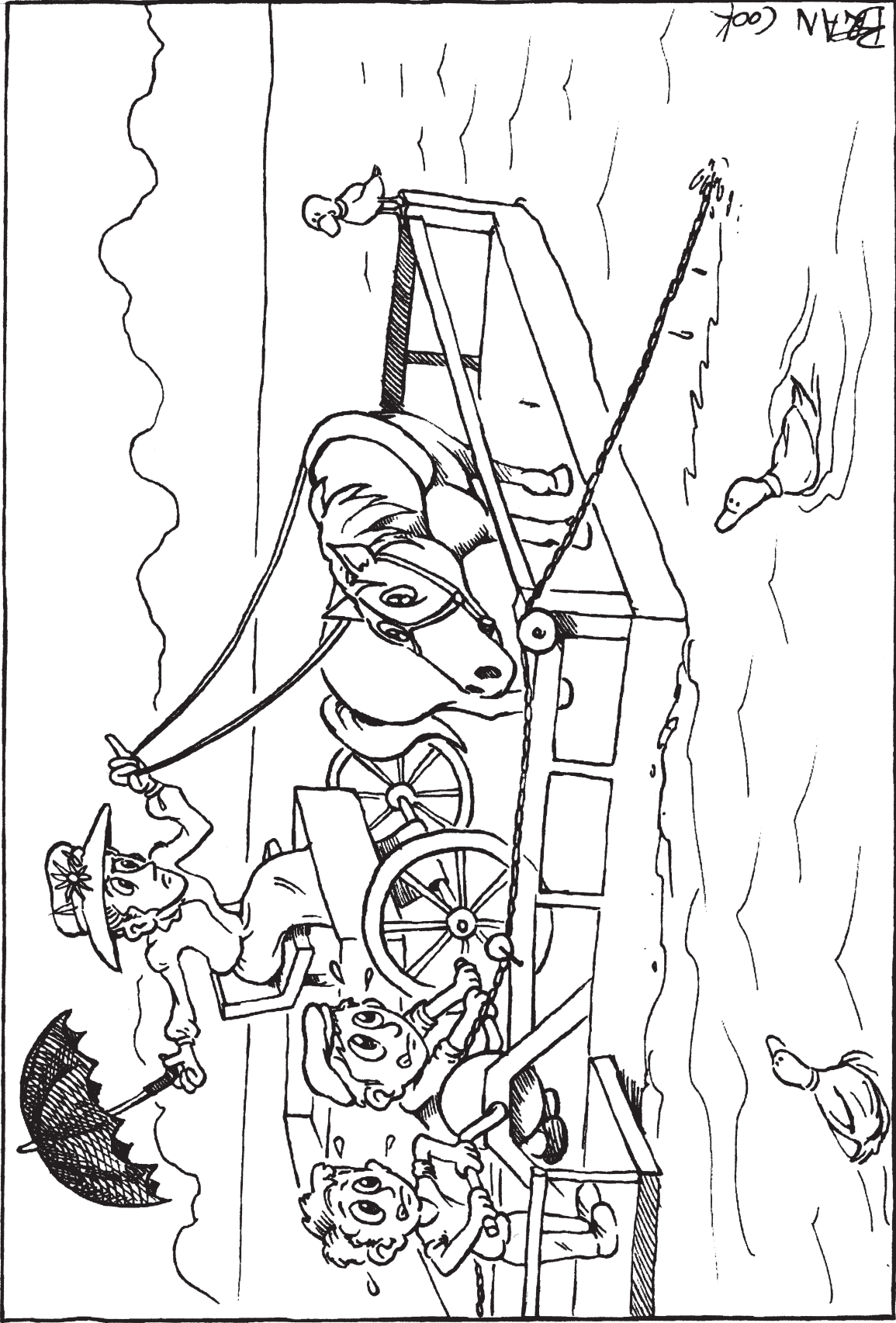
A crowd of visitors crossing the Kalamazoo.



A car on the ferry in 1918

History
Hunt

History Hunt #1: On the southern ferry landing look for the stone bench that honors the beloved ferryman Jay Myers.



BRAN COOK

Mt. Baldhead

Mt. Baldhead

When the first Europeans came to Saugatuck, Native Americans regularly danced on the "bald head" of this tall dune. Later, people came from miles around by cart and horseback to climb "Mt. Baldhead" for fun. In the 1840s a young schoolteacher named Constance Bingham met a bear on top of the dune. She ran down the dune as fast as her feet would take her.

In 1870, the Fat Men's Association of Allegan announced its intention to climb the "bald head" or "fail in the attempt." Back then, most people had to work hard to earn their supper and wealthy men were proud to show off how much they ate.

The Village of Saugatuck purchased the dune in 1884 and promoted it as a tourist attraction. Nearby hotels advertised "views of Mt. Baldhead." Souvenir stands, restaurants, a tavern, photo studios, Indian guides and even slot machines soon cropped up in Mt. Baldhead's shadow. The romance of the great dune was given a boost when a Fennville couple were married there on September 17, 1884.

A forty-foot high observatory tower was built on the top of the dune by a Chicagoan in 1884, and soon after the first stairway to the top was completed. No more shoes full of sand!



"Just after we climbed Bald-head May 21, 1909"

As the sand moved over and around the new construction, villagers realized that the wind off Lake Michigan was slowly pushing the dune eastward. People in Saugatuck feared the dune would creep into the river and flood the village. Trees were quickly planted to stabilize the sand. Over time, the dune's famous bald head grew a green forest.

In the 1950s, the dune was pressed into military service when a radar tower was added to spot enemy aircraft. The radar equipment has been removed but the tower and dome remain.

History Hunt

History Hunt #2: Today, thousands of people climb Mt. Baldhead's 302 steps to enjoy the panoramic views from its summit. Can you make it to the top?



Mrs. Swift's Heaven on Earth

Mrs. Swift's Heaven on Earth

In the 1890s, Annie Swift, wife of the famous Chicago meat-packing millionaire Gustavus Swift, was a rich woman but she was worried about the poor. Thousands of people, including children, were living in the city's crowded, dirty slums.

A minister in Chicago, Reverend George W. Gray, believed the lives of young people could be improved if they had a chance to experience the beauty of nature. He believed camping would build Christian faith. So he remade 160 acres of shore and woods south of Saugatuck into a village of cottages, tents, outdoor worship areas and hiking trails. He named his campground Forward Movement Park. By the summer of 1900, 500 young people were playing and singing in the woods.

Reverend Gray found an ally in Mrs. Swift. She provided the funding to build Swift Villa, a grand lodge with a dining hall and a hotel for 100 guests. The lobby had Michigan-made bentwood chairs. The Villa also had a soda lounge called Ye Tumble Inn that offered souvenirs, chocolate sodas, and the makings for marshmallow roasts. Room and board at the new Swift Villa was a bargain at \$2.50 per week. Groups of youngsters were brought by their teachers and church leaders. They traveled by steamship, train, and later, by car. The story of Swift Villa ended with a fire in 1954 but the idea of Christian camping lives on.



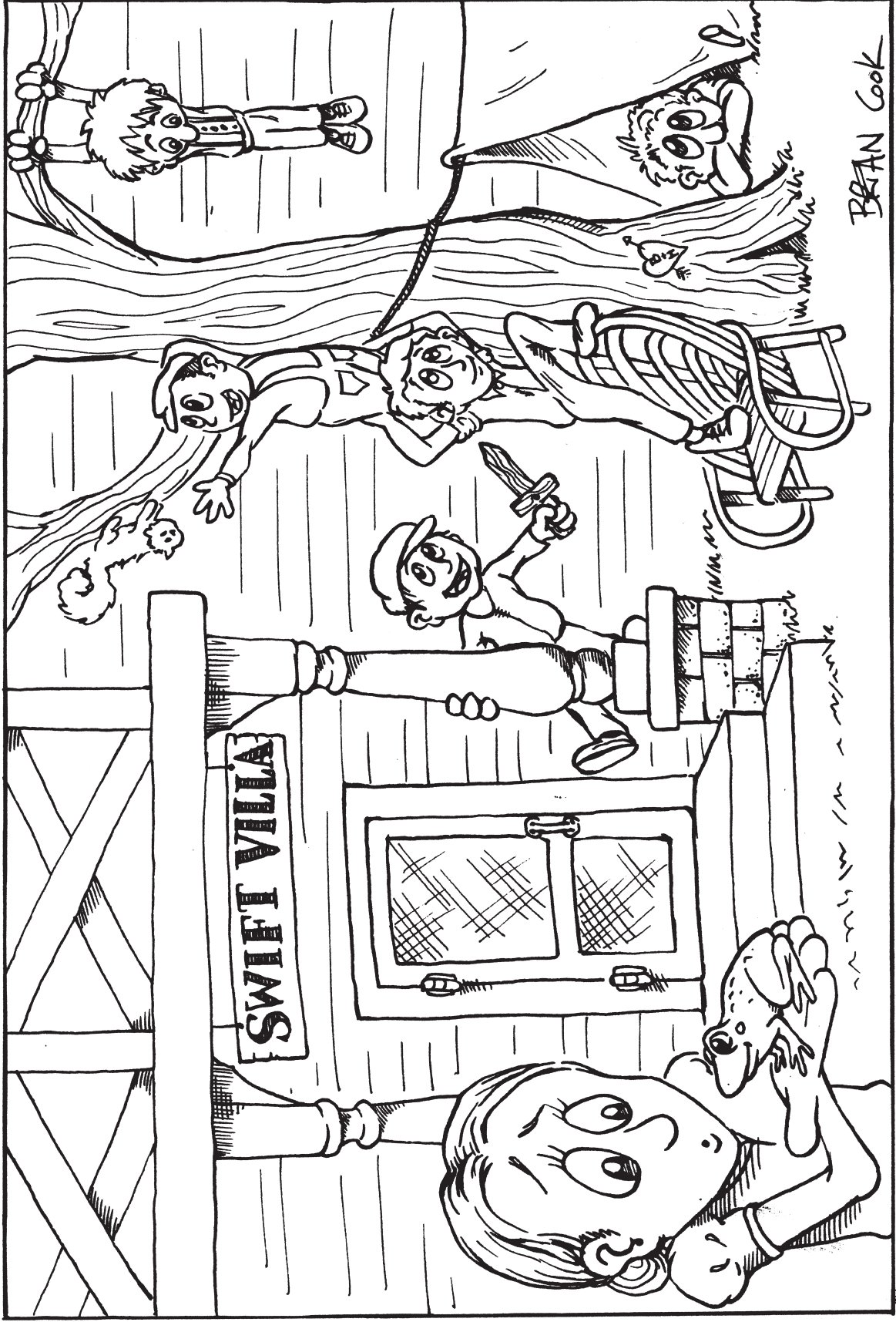
The front of the Swift Villa



Inside the Swift Villa

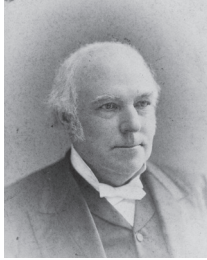
History
Hunt

History Hunt #3: In February 2014, the Presbytery of Chicago sold the campground to private developers for \$10 million. But you can still go to Oval Beach and imagine how amazing those golden dunes would have looked to a city child.



BRAN Cook

House of the Seven Gables



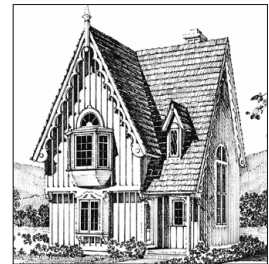
Reverend J.
Rice Taylor

House of the Seven Gables

In February 1862, Reverend J. Rice Taylor braved the bitter, winter cold to travel by horse-drawn sleigh from Allegan to Saugatuck. After giving a lecture in Saugatuck, he went on to the town of Singapore to baptize the Annesley and Wheeler children in a cabin near one of the sawmills. "It was with difficulty," he wrote about the crowded and overheated service, but "I congratulated myself when it ended." Back then Saugatuck and Singapore were wild mill towns.

But Reverend Taylor was not afraid of the frontier. He returned in 1868 to establish a new church with money from the local mill owner, F. B. Stockbridge and the people of Holland, Michigan.

For his new Saugatuck church, named All Saints, he commissioned the famous Detroit architect Gordon Lloyd to build the most beautiful Carpenter Gothic style church in Michigan. For his own house on Pleasant Street, Reverend Taylor used plans by one of America's best known architects, Andrew Jackson Downing. The Reverend, and his daughters, brought refined architectural taste to rustic Saugatuck. The Reverend's charming house became known as the House of the Seven Gables.



A gable is a section of a building's outside wall that is shaped like a triangle and is formed by two sections of the roof sloping down

History Hunt

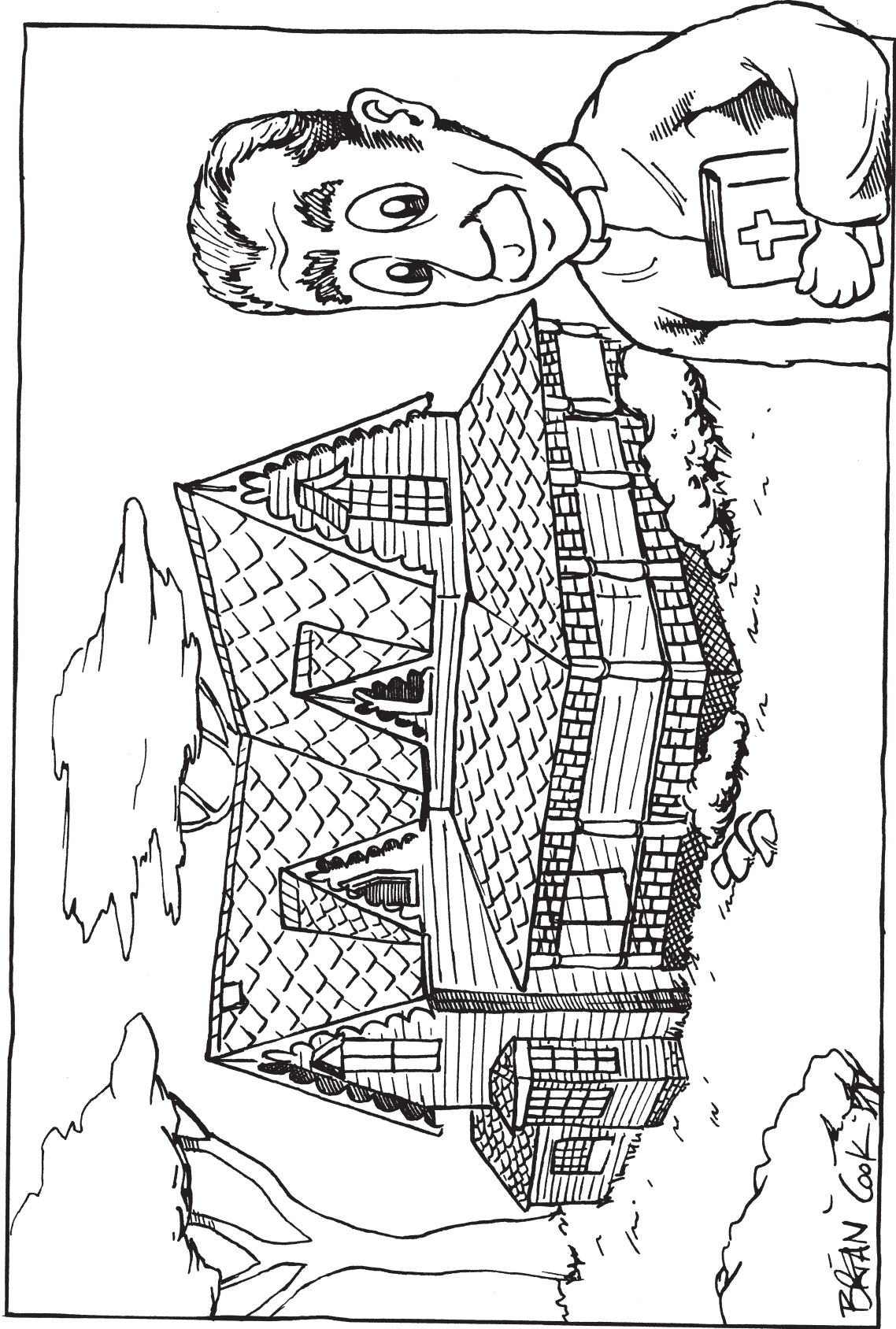
History Hunt #4: In 2014, the House of the Seven Gables was put on a truck and moved across the river to Douglas. You can see it now on Fremont Street, facing Beery Field. Look for the finely cut wooden "gingerbread" trim that decorates the house's many gables.

Bonus!

BONUS Hunt: All Saints' Episcopal Church still stands at 252 Grand Street in Saugatuck.



Crossing the Kalamazoo River on the Blue Star Highway bridge



Under the Treaty Tree



May Heath, 1894

Under the Treaty Tree

One morning in 1896, the fair-complexioned and blue-eyed May Heath looked out of her kitchen window and saw men, armed with axes and cross-cut saws, marching down Holland Street. A line of fallen trees marked their progress. She was aghast. They were going to cut down the Treaty Tree!

She grabbed her baby, ran out of the house, and confronted the men.

"Gentlemen! Not the Treaty Tree, the tree under which William Butler made his personal treaties with the Indian chiefs in the 1830s," May Heath cried. "We will not destroy Saugatuck's history!"

A tree cutter replied, "Madam, the village council has ordered this tree come down for street widening, so down we will take it."

"My husband is on the council," May Heath countered. "He said nothing about removing this tree."

"It doesn't matter, Madam, the tree comes down—now."

Not to be deterred, May Heath sat down at the foot of the giant white oak and refused to budge. The tree cutters, calculating that she would need to return home, stood to the side, waiting. It was a standoff.

By noon she had not gone—but her baby was beginning to fuss. The tree cutters saw an opportunity.

"Will you be going indoors to fix dinner for your husband and baby?" a tree cutter asked.

"My husband can fix his own meal," replied May Heath. Then she did something shocking for the 1890s. Beneath the tree, in plain public view of the workmen and anyone else who might pass by, she breast fed her baby. She would not be moving. The shaken tree cutters cleared off.

History Hunt #5: Can you find the Treaty Tree? The ancient oak still stands on the west side of Holland Street, north of Francis Street.

BONUS Hunt: On the watering fountain in the Saugatuck Village Green (southwest corner of Butler Street and Main Street) look for the memorial plaque for May Heath, our towns first historian.

History
Hunt

Bonus!



Coloring by _____

Spear Street Kids

Spear Street Kids

When Burr Tillstrom had visitors to his Saugatuck home he would often bring one of his puppets into the conversation.

First came Kukla the clown, then Ollie the dragon, then the whole troop: Madame Ooglepuss, Buelah the Witch, Cecil Bill, Fletcher Rabbit, Colonel Crackie. Burr called these puppets “the kids.”

The kids were the stars of television’s first big puppet show Kukla, Fran, and Ollie. The kids were so famous they once received fifteen thousand fan letters a week. Burr created, moved and gave his puppets their voice and personality but on the television screen, nobody saw Burr. He was hidden behind a wall and curtain. Instead, the viewers saw the lovely Fran Allison. She stood in front of the puppet theatre and talked and sang with the kids. Fran once said that Kukla and Ollie were “are as real to me as people.” While the cameras were running, Fran never knew what would happen next. The show had no script! Burr once said, “You don’t need a script when you’re talking to your friends.”

Burr’s puppet kids were called the “Kuklapolitans.” They spent much of their time in Chicago—at Marshall Field’s department store for Saturday puppet shows, at the NBC and ABC television studios, at Burr’s Chicago home—and were frequently on the road for special appearances.



Kukla, Burr Tillstrom, Fran Allison and Ollie

But the kids also lived in Saugatuck at Burr’s house on upper Spear Street. They gave some of their best performances on special Saugatuck and Holland occasions like when they were narrators for Saugatuck’s civic celebration in 1971.

Burr Tillstrom died in 1985 but anyone who was a kid in the 1950s remembers Kukla, Fran, and Ollie.

History Hunt #6: Can you find the memorial to puppeteer Burr Tillstrom on the Saugatuck Village Green? The Green is on the southwest corner of Butler Street and Main Street, across the street from the playground.

History
Hunt



Coloring by _____

Music in the Woods

Music in the Woods

John Wheeler left his homeland of Ireland to escape the Great Famine. He went to New York, then to Chicago. In 1853 he crossed Lake Michigan to work as a carpenter in Saugatuck, a town that once stood at the mouth of the Saugatuck harbor.

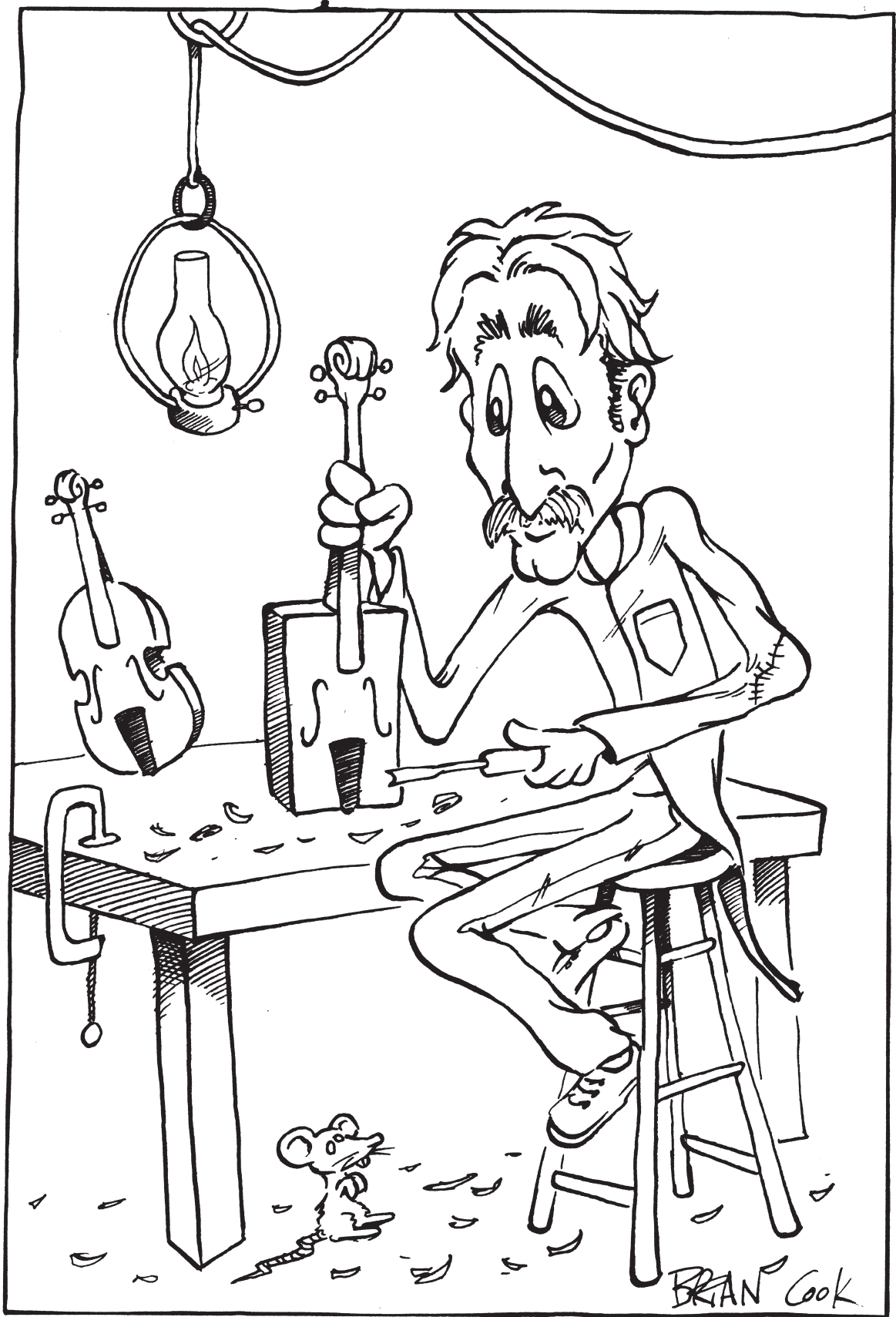
A carpenter is a person who builds objects or structures out of wood. All his life John Wheeler was awestruck by the many varieties of beautiful wood found in the nearby forests. He used this wood to build houses, furniture and when he moved his family to Saugatuck, he became a seller of wood shingles.

In Saugatuck, he built a tall, L-shaped house for his four daughters. It was one of the largest wooden houses in the village with 18 rooms and with views of the river and Mt. Baldhead. One of the Wheeler daughters was married there on July 3, 1882. Later, the Wheeler girls turned this house into one of Saugatuck's very first "bed & breakfast" inns.

His violin was his constant companion, and John Wheeler was the village fiddler and concertina player, providing the village with Irish songs, stories, and wit. Using local wood, he tried to build the perfect fiddle. One of his best known was an odd-looking rectangular instrument that sounded like a violin. In 1892, he began production of what he said would be one thousand violins. No one knows how many still exist.

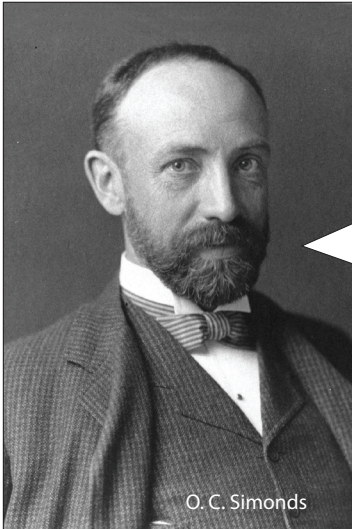
History Hunt #7: You don't have to be a musician or a carpenter to hear the music in the Michigan woods. Take a hike in the Saugatuck Dunes State Park, just north of town, and you'll hear the songs of birds and the wind whistling in the trees.

History
Hunt



Coloring by _____

A boy meets a remarkable man



O. C. Simonds

Landscape architect Ossian Cole Simonds began designing with native plants at Graceland Cemetery in Chicago as early as 1880. He redesigned and extended Chicago's Lincoln Park, drew the original plans for the Morton Arboretum, and designed the Nichols Arboretum at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. His landscapes enhanced the spirit of a place to "open the eyes of those who fail to see such beauty as already exists."

A boy meets a remarkable man

"When I was about seven or eight, my job was to deliver milk from my father's farm to a customer a mile away. For this, I had to get up at five in the morning and walk along a hillside road. I didn't like getting up so early and I didn't like the long walk; and as I walked along I felt sorry for myself.

Then one day I met a remarkable man. I hadn't seen him before, nor have I seen him since, yet that meeting changed my life. He stopped to talk to me; and I suppose I complained about my long walks. He kindly said, 'My friend, how mistaken you are! What a pleasure in life you are missing. Instead of complaining and thinking gloomy thoughts, you should realize what a joy it is to be able to walk along this hillside and to observe the growth and change of the trees.

Do you see the mist rising over the valley, creeping upward among the alder branches? Do you see the first rays of the sun in the tree tops on the maples heralding the sun before you can actually see it? What a privilege you have, my friend, to be able to take this walk everyday. I feel lucky if I can get here at this hour once a month. Do you know the aspens and red-barked dogwoods? Count them as you walk along and you will find you will end your walk all too soon."*

The boy was O. C. Simonds and he claimed this encounter taught him to appreciate the beauty of a simple scene along a roadside. Simonds grew up to be a famous landscape architect. Around 1900, he purchased a Greek Revival farmhouse in Pier Cove to be his summer home. The land was barren, all the trees cut down by loggers. Simonds planted an experimental arboretum across from the house to test how different plants grow in Michigan.

History Hunt #8: Near Pier Cove Park, at 2290 Lakeshore Drive in Fennville, is the Pier Cove Ravine Trust, a sanctuary and memorial to Simonds' vision. Take note of the many kinds of trees that inspired young O. C. Simonds.

History
Hunt

*Landscape-Gardening
by O. C. Simonds, 1920



Coloring by _____

Mrs. Vosburgh's Chapel

Mrs. Vosburgh's Chapel

It started with Sunday evening song gatherings on the Douglas beach in the late 1890s. After several years, one of the beach moms, Annie J. Vosburgh of Oak Park, Illinois, organized Sunday School services in her Douglas cottage for adults and children. Soon more than one hundred worshipers were squeezing into Mrs. Vosburgh's cottage.

It was too crowded. They wanted a proper chapel. The children got together and began collecting their pennies in jars. Soon they had \$100 in pennies! (That's more than 50 pounds of coins!) The kids had collected enough money to start building a little chapel on a dune on Farmer McVea's land, right smack on the border between Douglas and Saugatuck.



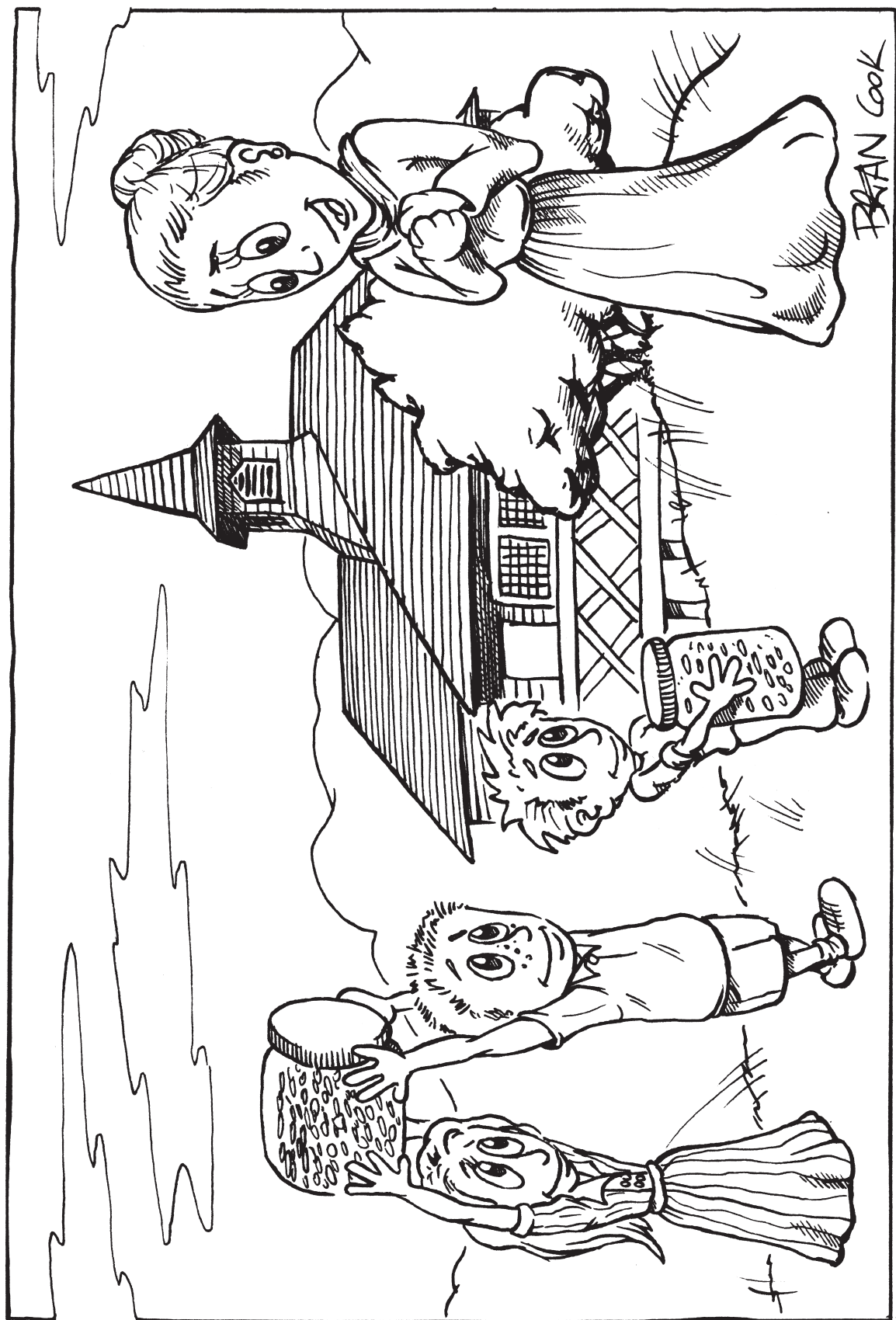
The Lake Shore Chapel

The design was by Harry L. Walker, a young architect from Oak Park, Illinois. The new chapel thrilled the returning cottagers in the summer of 1904. It was a charming wood structure with a fine flared roof, wood clapboard siding, exposed interior structure, and big windows, each with 48 panes of clear glass, that opened to the woods and the sound of Lake Michigan beyond.

The chapel was built in a craftsman-prairie style that was made popular by another Oak Park architect of the time, Frank Lloyd Wright. The simplicity of the chapel matched the simplicity of a Saugatuck summers. In 1997, the Lake Shore Chapel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

History Hunt #9: Can you find the little church in the woods? The non-denominational church still stands at the corner of Lake Shore and Campbell Road in Saugatuck and holds Sunday services in July and August. It all started with a penny!

History
Hunt



The White Squaw

The White Squaw

Mary Elizabeth Peckham left her Vermont home in the 1830s looking for a life of adventure. She was the teacher at the rough-and-ready mill town of Singapore when she married Stephen Morrison and changed her name to Mary Morrison. Soon after, they moved to Saugatuck and lived in a small house near her husband's new saw mill. The woods around the house also contained the wigwam homes of the local Native Americans. Mr. Morrison was the postmaster so he spent many days walking the trails to deliver mail. Mrs. Morrison stayed at home, all alone except for her children.

The ways of the local Native Americans were strange to her, even a little frightening. But Mrs. Morrison was a brave woman. She would take one of her children on her lap and ride her white horse, named Major, to visit friends miles away.

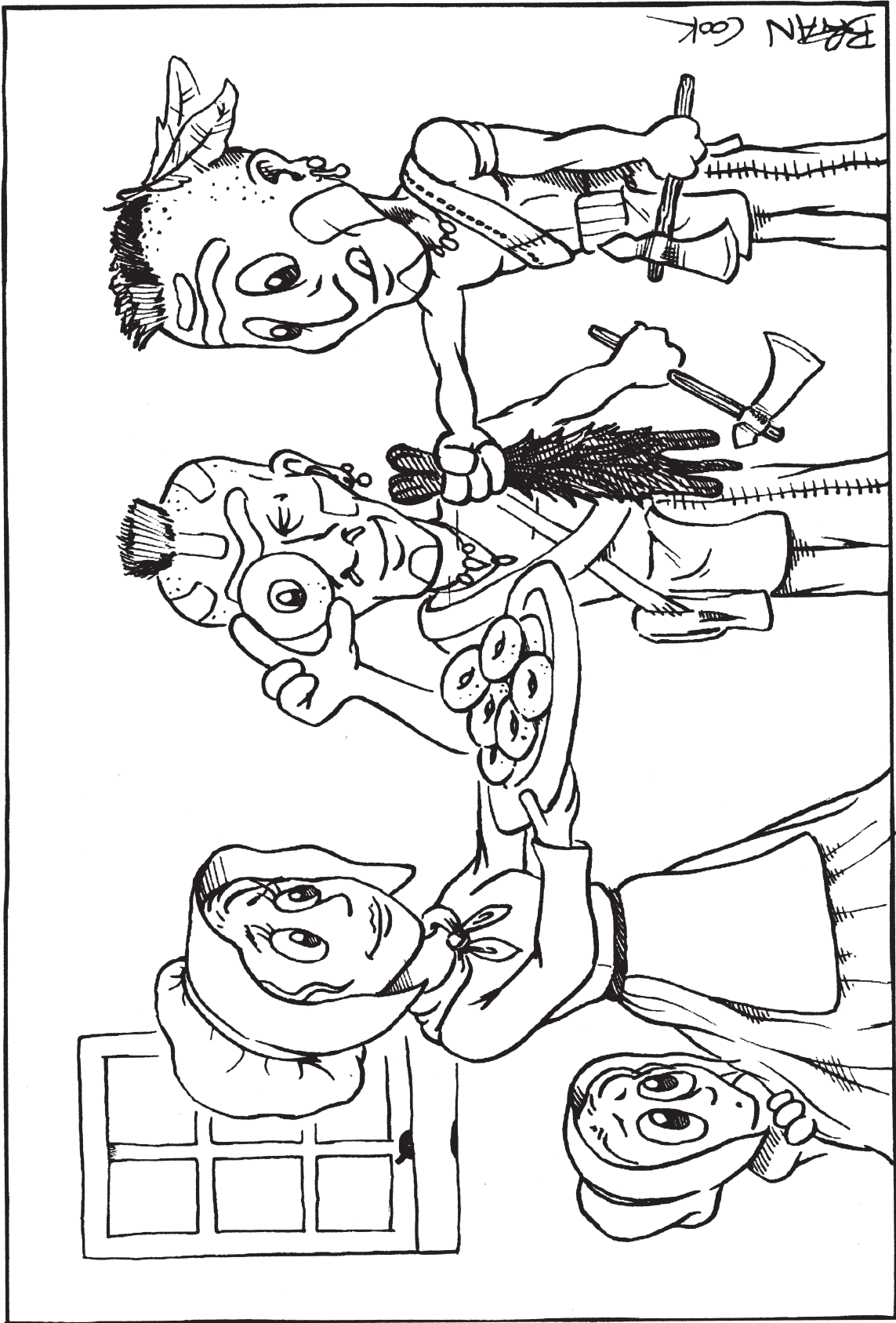
Eventually, Mrs. Morrison got to know her Native American neighbors and called them her "true friends." Sometimes they slept by her fireplace, rolled up in blankets, or would walk into the house when she was baking and eat whatever they wanted. In return, they brought her gifts of venison, wild birds, fish, honey, and maple sugar. Mrs. Morrison became known as the "White Squaw." She tried to teach the Indian women how to make "white-woman's bread" in a brick oven, but they did not like it. They called it "cheatem bread" because it was full of holes. They much preferred her sweet doughnuts and Johnny Cakes. One day her little daughter Julia, known as "White Papoose," got lost in the woods while gathering flowers and could not be found. Mrs. Morrison's Native American friends were asked to help. After several hours, they found little Julia—to much rejoicing. Looking back, Mrs. Morrison described her life as full of "nice, wild, enthusiastic excitement."

Mrs. Morrison
in 1840



History
Hunt

History Hunt #10: Behind the Village Hall, at the Northwest corner of Butler and Culver street, look for the Indian Monument, a boulder placed to mark the burial grounds discovered when the Hall was built in the late 1880s.



Coloring by _____

Two Brothers

Two Brothers

In 1938, millions of young men and women were worried about their future. America was still suffering under the economic hard times called the Great Depression and a war was on the horizon in Europe.

That same year, two Douglas boys, Orville and Stephen Millar, became local heroes when they opened a flashy new service station. The automobile had once been a luxury only a rich person could afford. But slowly, as the price came down, and better roads and bridges were being built, cars became more common.

The station was in a perfect location at the Douglas end of a new bridge on a new highway called U. S. 31. When a car drove up, one of the boys ran out to ask the driver, "Fill 'er up, sir?" Not only did the boys operate the pump to fill the car with gasoline, they also washed the windshield and checked the oil and tire air pressure. They wore special uniforms.

The square building had cream-colored glazed brick and a large display window. An outdoor hoist lifted cars for inspection, lubrication, repairs and changing tires. Three handsome pumps, including one of the new computing types, were surrounded by modern lighting for nighttime service. The station had a ladies restroom, a Coca-Cola machine, and a credit purchase plan. But records show that some people got a "fill-up" but did not pay up.



Orville Millar



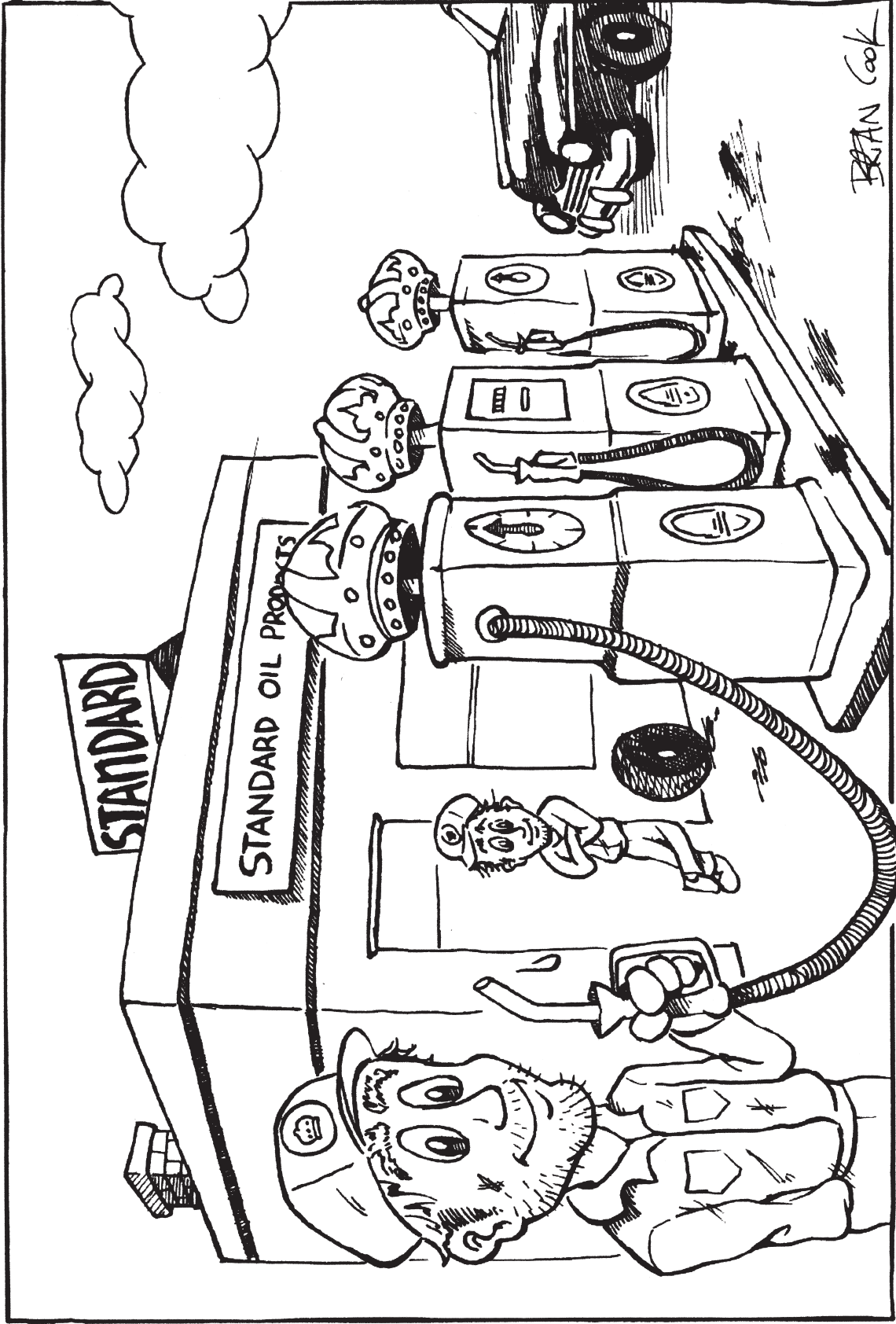
Stephen Millar

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, the brothers informed the Standard Oil Company that "we are resigning our position as operators of this station." Soon tires and gasoline were rationed for the war effort. The once-busy Highway 31 Bridge was deserted except for trucks and busses and "essential" cars.

Stephen enlisted in the Navy, and Orville in the Army. Both returned home to Douglas—Stephen to work for Chris Craft and Orville for Baker Furniture.

History Hunt #11: The building still stands on the Douglas side of the Blue Star Highway bridge but it is no longer a gas station. Can you find it?

History
Hunt



Jonathan Wade's Dream

Jonathan Wade's Dream

Canadian Jonathan Wade lost everything, his job, his fortune, and his home when his Singapore saw mill was destroyed by fire in 1846s. Wade must have been a hardworking fellow because by 1851 he was able to purchase a section of empty land upriver and across from Saugatuck.

On this land, Wade built a brand new village named Dudleyville. Later, Dudleyville became a part of Douglas. It all started with a lumber mill.

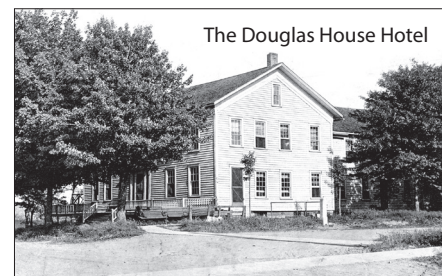
Wade adopted a typical business plan for the time: he brought in his family to help. First came brother Nelson, then Dudley, and soon a large family was pooling money and opening businesses. They cut logs into lumber, manufactured bricks, sold pieces of land, built houses, planted orchards, welcomed travelers to their hotel and sold fish door-to-door. At the same time, the Wade clan carried on a political feud with a new family in town, the Dutchers, who owned the north half of the town. Center Street became the dividing line between the two little empires.

Wade's Hotel, a handsome Michigan-style Greek Revival building—later called the Eagle Hotel, then the Douglas House, was one of the area's finest stage coach inns. It included a dining room, barroom, stables, guest rooms and held Saturday night dances.

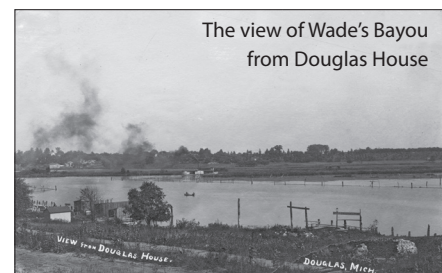
In 1851, Wade built a house at the south end of the village, on a gentle hillside overlooking a beautiful bayou called Wade's Bayou. The tiny but charming house, built from planks of wood had two rooms down and two rooms up. Later the Wades moved to a grander house with great orchards but still with view of the Bayou.

History Hunt #12: Jonathan Wade's original house still stands at 149 Washington Street in Douglas. It is a private residence and not open to the public. But anyone can enjoy the views of Wade's Bayou from the park at the eastern end of Center Street. Look for swans and kayakers paddling on the smooth waters.

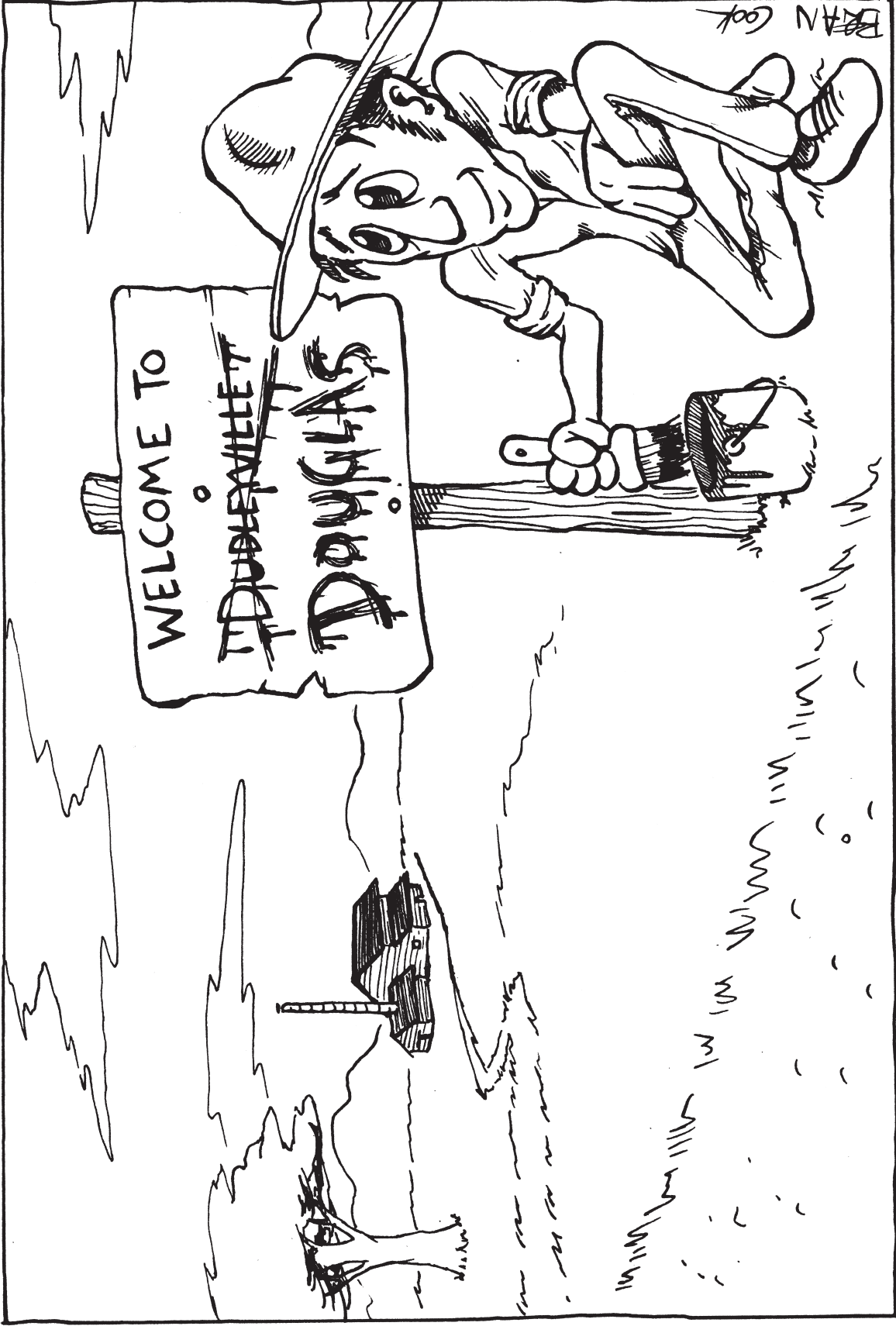
History
Hunt



The Douglas House Hotel



The view of Wade's Bayou
from Douglas House



Coloring by _____

Helen's Chair

HELEN'S CHAIR

Many of the objects in a home have hidden stories. The quaint white house at 256 Spear Street is one of the oldest in the village and holds a century and a half of stories of ships, captains, lighthouse keepers, of a local doctor and his wife who saved a little girl by giving her a home, of boys returning from the tragic American Civil War, of women and men going off to Europe and Asia to serve their country in World War II.

One of these special objects is a highchair bought in 1898 for little Helen Job, the first of four daughters of an American diplomat, Frederick W. Job, and his wife.

Helen's use of the chair was followed by that of her sisters Virginia, Mary Bell, and Cordelia. As a young woman, Helen worked for the Red Cross during World War I, while Cordelia, was a teacher in the Philippines when World War II broke out, and subsequently found herself a prisoner in a Japanese concentration camp until she was set free by the American general, McArthur, in 1945.

The next generation of the family was three girls and five boys. All of the boys served in World War II—William, Robert, Richard, Frederick, and Jack—some in the Pacific, some in Europe. William was an Army air bombardier who crash landed a number of his 26 missions, but came home without a scratch.

And soon there was a third, then fourth, and now fifth generation—each and every one occupying “Helen's Chair” —surrounded by generations of stories.

History Hunt #13: Look around your own home. Can you find an old object that your family treats with special respect? Ask your parents, grandparents, even your aunts and uncles to tell you the stories that go with your family's special artifacts.



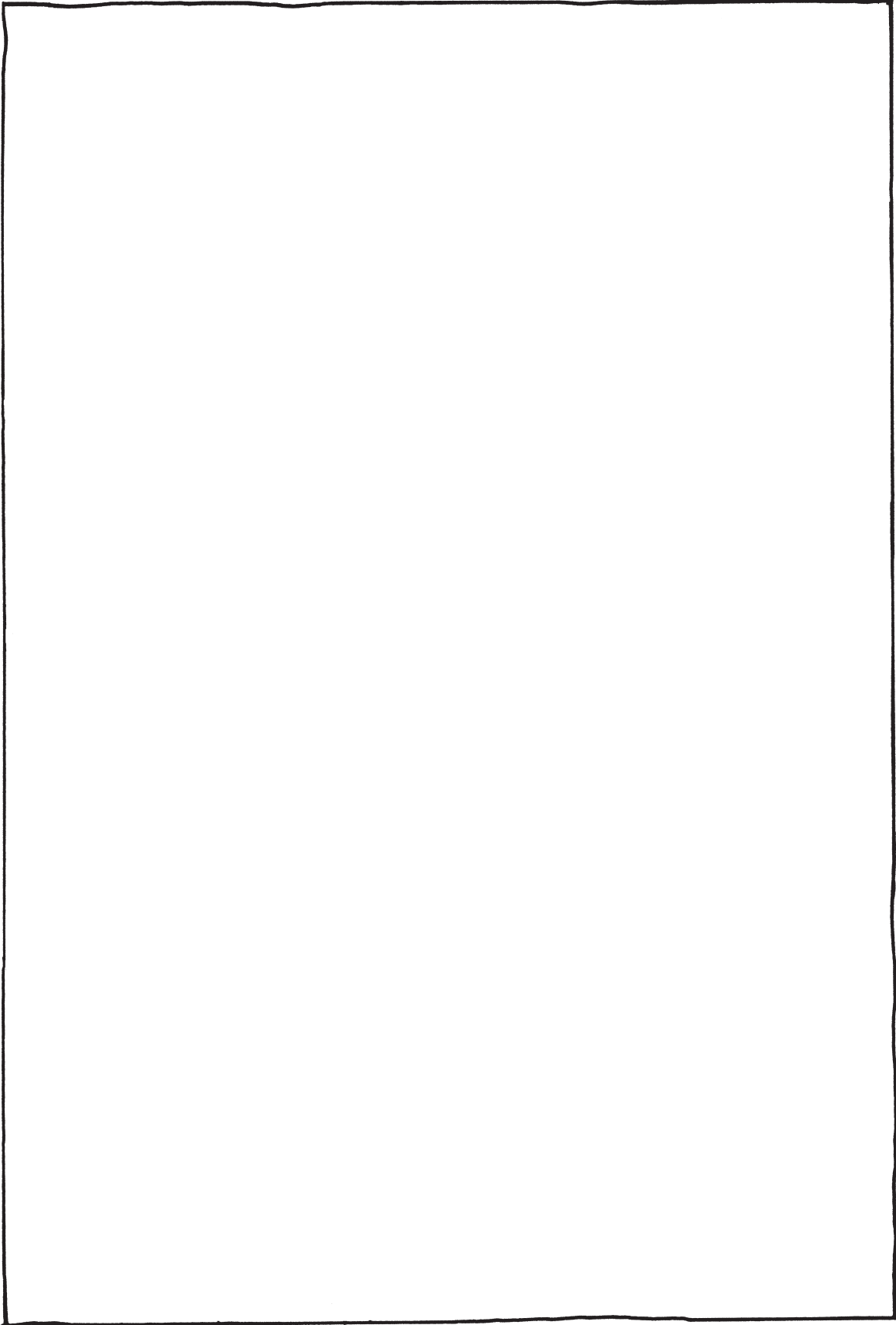
History
Hunt



Coloring by _____

Tell your Saugatuck story here

Tell your Saugatuck story here



Coloring by _____

Tales of the Villages History Hunt Map



Your guide to 12 historic spots in the Saugatuck and Douglas area.