

The Villager

OPERATIONS UPDATE

During the winter months, *The Villager* will be abbreviated to two pages.

The mission of Charlton Park is to provide educational and recreational opportunities, through the collection, preservation and demonstration of early rural Michigan life, artifacts and buildings, and the management of natural and recreation areas.

www.charltonpark.org (269) 945-3775

Park hours Winter 2018 -
Park Gate open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily
Business Office open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday
Historic Village closed.

Banner photo courtesy of Photographic Memory

Grounds clean-up around the Park was completed after the leaves finally decided to fall. The boat dock was pulled out of the water in the recreation



area in anticipation of snow and ice. At the conclusion of the "Of Christmas Past" event, work was done to winterize the village buildings in preparation for

the colder months ahead. We have also started projects for 2018, including ensuring all Park tools and equipment are in working order, taking inventory of the picnic tables and repairing them as needed, and making sure the main drive into the Park is clear of ice and snow.

EVENT NEWS

The 36th annual "Of Christmas Past" event was held at the Park on December 9-10. We were once again the beneficiary of some festive snowfall courtesy of Mother Nature, which contributed to the idyllic scenery within the village for the weekend. We thank the 870 guests who celebrated the season and whose



financial support assists the events' longevity. The event also would not have been possible without the Charlton Park Village Foundation, Thornapple Wind Band, Thornapple Valley Dulcimer Society, Hastings Train Club, Hastings Rotary

Club, Dave DeDecker and Michelle Duits from the Thornapple Arts Council, and Grove Hill Tree Farm, who donate their services and time.

Thanks also to Park volunteers Elaine Drury, Walt Eavey, Steve Evans, Carol and John Foley, Regina Gorham, Pat and Megan Graham, Julie Guenther, Sara Humes, Kristina Mann, Laura McBeth, Herb and Mary Jo McPeake, Lisa Nelson, Megan and Jesse Osetek,



Terry Pardue, Joie Perry, Claire Phillips, Tim Raymond, Ann Replogle, Brian Reynolds, Amanda Rumsey, Darlene and Tim Rumsey, Tim and Lisa Rumsey, Emma and Rosa Seif, John St. John, Barb Turkal, and James Tyler for interpreting the holiday spirit in the village buildings.

EDUCATION

We held 81 programs throughout the year, bringing in approximately 4,450 children, teachers, and adult chaperones to the Park. This includes programs outside of our traditional offerings, like YMCA Adventure Camp, general tours, and No Family Left Indoors. 2018 is already filling up fast!

Thanks goes to our fall volunteers: Bonnie David, Elaine Drury, Carol Foley, Claire Herhold, Judith and Eugene Kidder, Katie Ponsetto, Barb Turkal, and Sharon Zebrowski for all their help in the fall season. Thanks also to our interpreters Steve Evans, Ellie Benedict, and Vickie St. John. We're so grateful for everyone who helped out this year and everyone who visited. We're looking forward to a great 2018!



WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, TO RELAX, TO HAVE FUN: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

PARK HAPPENINGS

The Park and its pack of jolly elves were delighted to participate once again in the Hastings Christmas Parade sponsored by the Hastings Rotary Club and Downtown Development Authority on December 2. Special thanks to Roger and Nancy Smith for bringing festive merriment and light to the city on the Park's behalf.

The Park will be at the forefront of the minds of tourists, as the Michigan Department of Transportation has again invited us to supply our rack cards to ten of the fourteen Michigan Welcome Centers across the state. More than 6.1 million travelers visit the Centers annually. The Park experiences an influx of tourists between April and October, and many of them come to us via their travels on our interstates and highways. We thank MDOT for allowing us the opportunity to promote our Park.

COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

The *Barry County Artists Exhibition* ended on December 10, 2017, at the conclusion of the "Of Christmas Past" event. The exhibit was very well received, and it was a great opportunity to show off the works of local artists. A big thank you to the Thornapple Arts Council for their hard work and support!



We are excited to announce that a very special exhibit will be on display at the Irving D. Charlton Memorial Museum this summer. Between June 16 and August 11, we will be hosting *The Power of Children: Making a Difference*. This exhibit explores the lives of Anne Frank, Ruby Bridges, and Ryan White and their impact in making a positive difference in the world. It is organized by The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, has been made possible by **NEH on the Road**, an initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and has been adapted to tour nationally by the Mid-America Arts Alliance. Keep an eye out this spring for more information!

O'NEIL JAMES "JIM" NEWKIRK

We were extremely sad to hear of O'Neil James "Jim" Newkirk's passing on December 7, 2017, at the age of 70. Jim was a re-enactor with Battery D, 1st Michigan Light Artillery, its commander since 1980. The Battery D, 1st Michigan Light Artillery group participates in the Civil War Muster at the Park every year, and Jim was on the committee for the event for a long time. In his later years, he could be seen during the High Meadows battle scenarios explaining to spectators what



exactly was happening. He had a wealth of knowledge and was always willing to share. Outside of the Civil War event, Jim also assisted with collections projects and public programs at the Park. He helped us to identify some of the guns in our collection, and he (along with the rest of Battery D) gave a presentation about the role of artillery in battle (photo). He will be greatly missed. The link to his full obituary can be found [here](#).

FOUNDATION UPDATE

The Charlton Park Village Foundation launched its 2017 Annual Giving Campaign on November 27, with a year-end fundraising mailing sent to 260 households. To date, more than \$25,500 has been raised by 36 generous donors, but we need your involvement! You may be wondering, "How does my financial gift make an impact at the Park?" Funds raised have been earmarked for continued work by the collection data registrar, and installation of wayfinding and interpretive signage for some of the historical buildings and Exhibition Hall to better serve our guests. Interested in supporting the Foundation? Donations can be mailed to the Park, or donate online with a credit or debit card at our [website](#).

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season, and wish you safety and happiness in 2018!