

January/February 2018

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

With the first few weeks of the new year snowy and cold, outside of the seasonal snow removal, we were able to complete some of our indoor projects. The stone restroom (near Main Street) has been spruced up with minor repairs and a fresh coat of paint. We'd like to give a special thank you to the maintenance volunteers. Without them, many of the projects we have would take more time to complete, so they are integral in helping make Historic Charlton Park a great place! They're dedicated, perform high quality work, and they're fun to hang out with! If this sounds like something you're interested in, be sure to contact Ben Strimback or Shannon Pinkster, we would love to talk to you.

PARK HAPPENINGS

We hosted 175 Boy Scouts from the Gerald R. Ford Council during the annual Winter Klondike on February 2-4. Attendees enjoyed learning about outdoor survival skills, watching ice rescue demonstrations, sledding, and preparing meals onsite. Thank you to the Council for its generous donation to the Park's rental fund in return for use of the Park.

The Park was excited to be represented by its Director, Dan Patton, during the Barry Conservation District's inaugural "Faces of Conservation" event on February 16 at the Walldorff Brewpub & Bistro Ballroom. A fun evening of networking with conservationists from throughout the area was had by all attendees.

The Park hosted 60 people for the Sportsman's Outreach Team Kids Free Fishing Weekend at the Charlton Park Beach on February 17. 26 kids under the age of 15 were the recipient of free ice fishing gear and the Michigan DNR waived the fishing license requirement for all fishermen and women that day. Thank you to Dave Neeson and his crew for organizing the event and to Al & Pete's Sport Shop and K&E Tackle for sponsoring the day.

FEBRUARY FLOOD

The last week of February, with the unseasonably warm weather, melting snow, and buckets of rain, the Thornapple River rose to almost 100-year-flood levels. With its proximity to the river, Historic Charlton Park was in the crosshairs. Fortunately, although it looks precarious in these photos, we received very minimal damage to the buildings in the village. We are so grateful for all of the kind words and offers of assistance we received during this historic flood, it was a doozy!



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

FROM THE DESK OF CLAIRE JOHNSTON

I have been exceptionally lucky to be employed by the people of Barry County at Historic Charlton Park. It is a fabulous asset and spending my days there has been both a pleasure and a challenge. When I was hired by Dr. George Shannon in 2006, I never could have imagined the way that the Park (and I) would grow! Amazing things were accomplished during my time by the hard working individuals that love the Park and want to see Irving Charlton's vision thrive.

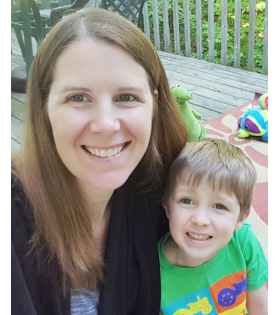
The excavation of Indian Landing (photo), led by Grand Valley State University, introduced me to some wonderful friends! Jack Boarts, David Chase, and Roberta Meeker were the first volunteers I connected with and I spent the next 10 years with them on almost a weekly basis. When the excavation was completed, they started working in other areas of the Park and made my job possible. I learned so much from them and all of the volunteers I came in contact with on a regular basis. They have all had a profound impact on my life, in big and small ways, and I will not forget that. Although my title has always had "curator" in it, my real curatorial work did not begin until I became the Curator and Exhibits Coordinator in 2012. I am very proud of the work accomplished regarding collections and exhibits.

You are probably wondering what's going on by this point! After 11 years, I have decided to leave Historic Charlton Park. I have the opportunity to make my family my priority and I am going to take it! But don't fret; I am leaving my duties in the capable hands of Shannon Pinkster, whose new title is Collections and Education Coordinator.



The rest of the staff - Dan Patton, Stacey Graham, Roger Smith, and Ben Strimback - is wonderful and enthusiastic and I know that the Park will continue to grow in their care.

I am not leaving the field entirely, I will be working part time from home for the Michigan Museums Association (MMA) as their membership and communications coordinator (Historic Charlton Park is a member of MMA). Plus, I am sure you will spot me at special events throughout the summer. I have grown up during my many years at the Park and it is time for a new challenge. I am taking with me a head full of best practices, your kind words from programs, events, and exhibits, and many lasting friendships. If you need me, please do not hesitate to get in touch, CJohnston@mimuseums.com. Thank you for everything!



SPONSORS NEEDED

Mark your calendars and save the date for the 12th annual Charlton Park Day on May 26 from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. The Park is currently in fundraising mode, reaching out to community members and businesses to raise the \$4,000 needed to complete the event. Sponsors who make a donation of \$100 or more have the opportunity for their banner to be posted on site during the event (banners provided by donor prior to event and returned at the conclusion). Please contact the Park office if you feel led to give to this important and fun day of community outreach. Charlton Park Day is a way for us to thank everyone for their support, and is a fun way to kick off the events season.



We hope to see you on May 26, 2018!