

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

PARK HAPPENINGS

In January 2011, we received an e-mail from a gentleman in New Zealand asking for information on the Westinghouse steam traction engine; he was in the process of building a scale model. After almost 2 years of correspondence, Peter and Gail Moy traveled all the way from Auckland, New Zealand to see the Westinghouse and visit Hastings! Russell Chaffee, a Gas & Steam Club member that originally restored and operates the Westinghouse, met with Peter to discuss the engine on September 13th. The couple was also invited to, and attended, the volunteer appreciation picnic. Peter has promised images of his project and we will be sure to share them in upcoming issues of this newsletter!

Claire and Shannon traveled to Muskegon, Michigan for the Michigan Museums Association annual conference on September 27th and 28th. (photo) They met with museum colleagues from all over the state and attended informative



sessions relating to all aspects of museums. They learned many things and are excited to see how they can use their new knowledge in a way that would best suit the Park. They also had a chance to catch up with 2012 intern Marie Morgan who sends an exuberant "Hello!" to the entire Charlton Park family.

Charlton Park hosted the Michigan Ghost Society (MGS) Ghost Tours the evenings of October 6th, 13th, and 20th. Thirty-six participants listened to a brief orientation in the Church before taking the opportunity to use paranormal research equipment to explore the Bristol Inn and Sixberry House. Thanks to MGS staff and volunteers Josh, Dallas, Teiko, Marco, Kevin Bekkering, Jason Kotecki, Sue Nielsen, Michelle Nielsen, Lil Kotecki, and Hollie Pykonen for their assistance with the ghost hunts.

On October 26th, Shannon visited the First Presbyterian Church to meet with the Menders group. They fed her many delicious things, and she returned the favor by giving a presentation about the Park. The presentation included a more in-depth history of the Park and many of its buildings, and also a sneak peek of ideas for potential new educational programming. Wholesome fun was had by all.

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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 maintenance of natural and recreation areas.



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EVENT NEWS

Havoc in Hastings was held on September 1st in the recreation area. Approximately 145 visitors came out and enjoyed the many event activities and vendors available on site. The heavy weapons contest seemed to be a huge spectator favorite.

We continued our streak of pleasant weather for the Walk-In-The-Spirit Pow Wow on September 15th



and 16th. (photo) Visitors shopped the vendor booths, spoke with the participants, and enjoyed the dancing and educational commentary that this Pow

Wow is well known for. Approximately 630 visitors attended over both days. Thanks go to Shihab Alam, Suzanne Arias, Troy Bass, Jack Boarts, Dave Chase, Elaine Drury, Sheila, Emily, Kristen, and Nick Iszler, Dan Harrow, Laura McBeth, Joe Medendorp, and Jenn, Emma, Rosa, and Micah Seif for providing interpretation in the village.

All Hallows Eve on October 27th was a **tremendous** success! For the second year in a row, children under the age of 12 paid no admission, increasing our attendance again from last year. We estimate as many as 1033 spectators (over 500 children) enjoyed the event! Jack Boarts, Dave Chase, Roberta Meeker, Mary Brink, Claire, Stacey, and Shannon made approximately 400 popcorn balls on Oct. 25th; they went very fast on event day. The apple games made a re-appearance on the green, the maze and costume contest were once again a huge success, and the



headless horseman popped up in various places in the Park. (photo) This year we added a scavenger hunt throughout the Park, with congratulations going out to Aubree Rowse for winning our Mystery Prize! Volunteers for the event were Shelly Armour (headless horsewoman), Jamie Bowman, Elaine Drury, Dan Harrow, Judith Kidder, Denny Kruger (MC),

Julie Kruger (headless horsewoman), Dorothy Leavitt, Frances Lindstrom, Varden Lindstrom, Laura McBeth, Jon Merrick, Zach Pinkster, Ann and Alexis Replogle, Emma and Rosa Seif, Kerri Steward, and Lorena Wright. Thank you to all of the volunteers for their flexibility and their "go with the flow" attitude for the day. We hope next year will be just as great!

The last event of the 2012 season is almost here! **Of Christmas Past** is back December 8th and 9th, promising a traditional experience families love. The event runs 12-5 p.m. both days with live music in the church and traditional crafts and food around the village. The wagon rides will be back (weather permitting), as will St. Nicholas. Cost is \$5 for adults, \$3 children 5-12, FREE if under 4 years. If you are interested in volunteering, please let Shannon Ritzer know.

COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

Many renovation projects have taken place over the last two months. The Mutual Building interior received a fresh coat of paint thanks to the Hastings Mutual Insurance Company and Parker Painting! The Hall House interior was repaired and repainted and the stove was moved further away from the front door for the safety of our visitors. A good portion of the floor in the back room of the house was also removed and replaced due to water damage. The boardwalk on the back of the house, which became slippery when it rained, was removed as well. Eaves trough has been installed on the back to curtail any continued water damage and the exterior of the building was also painted. (photo) The Park's maintenance staff was responsible for the work.



Special thanks to all of the volunteers that are working on inventory: Rebecca Kyes for the ethnographic collection, Mary Brinks and Sharon Zebrowski for the music collection, Judy Mudge for the postcard collection, and Jack and Grace Neubecker for the pocket watches.

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EDUCATION

Between September and December, the Park will be hosting 37 education programs. (That is 11 more than Fall 2011!) The month of November is once again free for schools in Barry County, so 2nd graders from almost every school system in the county will be coming out to enjoy a day at the Park. Thanks so much to our education volunteers Lois Bremer, Nancy Bitterling, Ruby Cairns, Bonnie David, Elaine Drury, Steve Evans, Melissa Gast, Bess Gross, Wes and Georgia Robinson, Kerri Steward, and Barb Turkal for all their help to make this a successful education season.

Spring 2013 is going to be busy – the month of May is almost completely booked already! The education volunteers are a wonderful group of individuals with a love of interpreting history for our elementary school friends, and they are a great bunch to work with. If you or someone you know are interested in volunteering with the education programs at Charlton Park, please contact Shannon Ritzer.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

The maintenance department has been busy prepping the Park for the upcoming winter, cleaning gutters, mulching leaves, winterizing the restrooms and recreation area. The renovation of the first floor of the



museum building is well underway with most of the sheet rock now on the walls. New board walk entrances have been installed in front of the Carpenter Shop

(photo) and the Hall House. Many dead and down trees have been cut down and cleaned up along the water line and many stumps have been removed.

VOLUNTEERS' CORNER

The Pavilion at Charlton Park was the scene for the Volunteer Picnic on September 13th. (photo) More



than 50 Volunteers, Gas & Steam Club Members, County Commissioners and Board Members attended the picnic. The menu included ham-

burgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, salads, baked beans, chips and dessert. Board Member Brian Reynolds, Shannon, Stacey and Dan presented a Park update. Tom and Dan manned the grills and Roger, Ron, Stacey and Shannon prepared food, served guests and helped clean up. Tables were decorated with festive mum plants and each attendee was encouraged to take a plant home with them as a token of the Park's appreciation. Thank you to all volunteers who donate their time, talent and treasure to Charlton Park. We value you!

Jack Boarts and Dave Chase have been hard at work on various projects throughout the Park! The

new doors on the Carpenter and Blacksmith Shops (photo) are the most conspicuous. The doors are similar in construction to the originals and are made from wood cut at our sawmill



by the Gas & Steam Club. Dave Chase also constructed 4 wonderful saddle stands for use in the Sixberry Carriage House display, which will likely open in 2013.

Please give a warm welcome to new volunteers Varden and Frances Lindstrom! They are long-time Park visitors who will be assisting with special events, particularly All Hallows Eve. Thanks Lindstroms!

Photos of past events and happenings are on Facebook, you don't even have to join to view them!

www.facebook.com/charltonpark

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Hours of Operation:
Open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Of Christmas Past

December 8th and 9th

Noon - 5 p.m. both days

Come celebrate a Victorian Christmas
at Charlton Park!

Live music in the Church
Enjoy wassail and plum pudding
Make crafts and dip candles
Tour the Village in a mule-drawn wagon

\$5 for adults

\$3 for children 4 - 12 years

Call the Park Office for more information or
find us on Facebook!