

Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve September 2024 Report

Kirby's Mill:

- Homeland Building (Larry and Ken Brichacek, owners and lead carpenters) have started balcony repairs including installing a temporary work platform over the dam.
- Restoration of the over-wheel water box, its supports, and flume outlet will begin after the balcony is finished.
- White oak lumber sourced and milled by Ohio Hardwood Furniture.
- The water wheel is currently stopped for annual maintenance: cleaning, re-balancing, and application of preservatives.

Amity House Restoration:

- Air conditioning installed by Lisco (total \$6,490). Funds for installation was a partnership between the RJRD (Amity Raffle fundraiser \$2,050) and Friends/individual donor matching contribution (Remaining \$4,440). There is a 10% outstanding balance until the building permits can be obtained and the inspection completed.
- We have reached out to a GC (still coordinating), electrician, and plumber. Electrician and plumber have both inspected the work and are willing to use their licenses when submitting the building permit applications. Coordinating with the park director on the final steps.

Garfield Hall:

- Interior timber header repaired where damaged by water.
- Retaining wall leveled and reinforced with rebar and concrete footer to prevent future movement. Sill plate and 4x4 posts installed with plans to install header, rafters, and sheathing this weekend.
- Rocco Masonry repaired the chimney (replaced the missing field stone and tuckpointed) leaving historic evidence of previous additions.
- With these repairs completed, Hinckley Roofing will be able to complete the re-roofing on the main roof.

Utilities:

- Friends' volunteers, with Doug Wisneski taking the lead, are working with the Park Director to get the north gas wells activated, making electrical repairs after the heavy wind storms last month, and repairing the electrical from Garfield to the well house.

Invasive Species Removal / Native Species support

- With approval from Chris Moore, volunteers remove a heavy line of multiflora rose bushes intermixed with poison ivy at the Kirby Day program area. Will continue to monitor for new growth next spring.
- Japanese knotweed has not been seen on the knoll below Kirby House all summer. Monitoring continues. Stands of Japanese knotweed have been removed from the former gardens west of Kirby House.
- A small amount of purple loosestrife on the west shore of Lake Jinelle were cut before they could go to seed. Loosestrife unreachable on the island was reported to Chris.
- Fall-blooming native wildflowers planted two years ago near the south parking lot two years ago are thriving.
- A healthy diversity of native plants have sprouted in the native habitat area near the Garfield Terrace.
- Undesirables such as multiflora rose and buckthorn are re-sprouting and need treatment. Barberry is re-sprouting in the central areas of the park. Small plants are being fig out. Larger ones need herbicide.
- Increase beaver activity noted along the lower lake shore
- Decrease of understory vegetation noted in several areas



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Historic District / Programs:

- The current restoration work has given us additional insights into Kirby's interest in continuous improvement of his structures.
- Our main history display was updated thanks to the William Wallace Fund of the Akron Community Foundation. New display stands have replaced over half of the camp bedframes that were inadvertently discarded in 2022. New signboards include more on science and the process of invention.
- Kirby Day hosted approximately 200 visitors who enjoyed Kirby-related amusements. Unfortunately, lack of occupancy permits unexpectedly prohibited use of the structures and curtailed some of the attractions. Nevertheless, we received positive comments from the community as well as new members and donors.
- Upcoming Events:
 - Sing Along: Saturday, September 28th (2pm-4pm) at the Summer Barn
 - Oviatt Septemberfest: Saturday, September 28th (11am-3pm)
 - History Hike: Sunday, October 6th (2pm-4pm)
 - Friends Members Meeting: Wednesday, November 20th (7pm-9pm) at the Lodge
 - Winter Wonders: Saturday, December 7th from 11am-4pm at the Lodge

RJRD / Friends of RHP MOU:

- We look forward to discussions regarding our role in RHP



Shoring the CMU retaining wall and adding the rebar, filled cells, and concrete footer.



Shoring the timber framing to remove damaged roof sheathing and repair the water damaged top plate timber.