Report to the Richfield Joint Recreation District
Friends of Richfield Heritage - September 2026

Mill bridge. *We are happy to report that GFT had no problem re-writing the contract so that RJRD is identified as the owner and Friends as the funders. We signed the first draft of this contract hoping that the evaluation could have been expedited. We believe that solid answers based on an on-site evaluation will give all of us the information we need to move forward. (contact to be forwarded in a separate message)*

Park structures
You may recall from a couple years ago that the Friends submitted Championing interest notifications for all of the Neal buildings, Championing proposals for all of the structures on the south end of the park- including potential uses for each; and a full Champion Application to lease Kirby House with the intention of restoring it and making it accessible for use as a program space. We are still willing to make these commitments because all of the remaining buildings in the park help to tell the stories of the Neals and Kirbys that are important to the Richfield community. Also, their repurposed use by Girl Scouts has been certified as historically significant to the entire region. Preservation helps to build support for the entire park. It's been a while since you've seen these, so the Friends would be happy to re-submit them.

Please keep in mind that historical discoveries are still being made at the park. The more structures that remain intact, the better our chances of understanding how everything in past eras worked together. A case in point is the theory that KIrby garage was once an ice house. A 1958 document from the old Girl Scout camp has recently come to light - confirming that there had been an ice house there. (attached). An essay about the patented lake was sent to RJRD on August 29th that ties all these elements together.

- *The **Garfield Hall** drawings are complete excepting input that only RJRD can provide. (this information will be in a separate message to follow)*
- *The **rift in the North House porch** is widening. The Friends were under the impression that we could at least begin an investgation. We obtained the measurements after which we were asked to stop our involvement.*
- ***Mold & moisture in in KIrby House basement**. This past spring, the Friends hired the company the park has been using for mold remediation, Nine by Nine Envornmental; to test the mill and Kirby House. The mill was clear. Kirby House has mold in the basement although it is not Black Mold. The company needs the moisture in the basement resolved before we hire them to come back in to tear out mold-bearing materials in the wall. Our preliminary assessment is that water is coming in through cracks in the concrete. We can patch the cracks and install gutters, but the majority of the water seems to be entering via ground water seepage. The first thing we need to do is re-grade around the house. We would like to begin developing a plan with the park director, but we are not currently permitted to use an excavator to do the work.*
- ***Black mold in KIrby garage.** NIne by Nine needs to remove the infected material including the roof. The Friends would need to follow up with a new roof immediately so that additional treatment can follow.*
- *However,for repairs to Kirby House, KIrby garage, and **repair of the perimeter fence**, further discussion on **RHP policy for volunteer tool and equipment usage would be helpful. The current severe restrictions will impact the timeline.***

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- ***We also hope to work with OHC to repair the Kirby driveway bridge.***

REPORT on Friends' activities over the summer and upcoming events

- *The architecture hike in July was well attended. Participants were highly engaged!*
- *KIrby Day: In spite of the rain, there were some enthusiastic families that showed up and enjoyed Marbles, STEM activities, and the "Fishing Friends" theme. Forty minutes into the event, the Park Director reached out with an order to shut down immediately. We complied.*
- *The Great Lakes chapter of SPOOM will be visiting KIrby's Mill and nearby points of interest on September 19.*
- *The Dorns and Neals will be hosting a private party here and viewing the park progress.*
- *Cleveland Restoration Society will be touring*
- *Richfield Seniors will experience an abbreviated tour on the senior bus*
- *Fall history hike, "Mysteries & Legends of RHP"; will be October 18. Open to ALL. Meet by the mill @ 2pm*
- *Winter Wonders in the Lodge and up to Amity porch on Dec 5. Soup luches at Amity House on subsequesnt Saturdays.*

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