



November 2020

Dear Mackinac Associates Members:

Now that the 2020 season has ended, we begin to look toward 2021. While we did not get to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Mackinac State Historic Parks how we would have liked, we are still very grateful for the season we did have and the continued support of Mackinac Associates members.

This past season brought much uncertainty for park sites. While Mackinac State Historic Parks revenues were better than expected during this challenging season with attendance improving as the season progressed, revenue was still significantly lower than what was originally budgeted.

Rather than taking on several new projects in 2021, Mackinac Associates is supporting Mackinac State Historic Parks staff as they reimagine existing programs and look for ways to ensure signature programs such as the archaeology field project continue uninterrupted into the future.

With your help, 2021 will be the 63rd consecutive season for the Colonial Michilimackinac archaeology field project. Every summer from mid-June to late August, visitors can watch archaeology in progress at Colonial Michilimackinac in Mackinaw City, the site of a reconstructed 18th-century fort and fur-trading village. An interpreter is on site to answer visitor questions, explain the process and show sample artifacts.



Started in 1959, the excavation at Michilimackinac is one of the longest ongoing projects of its kind in North America. Structures there are built on previously excavated areas and interpretation is guided by what was found at the site in addition to available records documenting that time period.



Over a million artifacts have been recovered since 1959, providing valuable information regarding diets, trade goods, firearms and recreation, helping identify between French and British, and military and civilian.

A pause in this program could leave artifacts exposed and cause deterioration at the site. The longer the project takes, the more the integrity of the site is threatened.



While the support of Mackinac Associates members is always valued and appreciated, it is especially critical during these challenging times. By supporting the upcoming season of the archaeology field project, you will help Mackinac State Historic Parks continue to protect, preserve, and present the rich historic resources of the Straits of Mackinac and make history come alive for all of us!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Harriet K. McGraw.

Harriet K. McGraw, President
Mackinac Associates

Handwritten signature of Steven C. Brisson.

Steven C. Brisson, Director
Mackinac State Historic Parks