

SANDY UPDATE

Welcome, Neighbor!

The new “Charlie’s of Bay Head” building is a beautiful new centerpiece for the town.



Jill Ocone

Charlie’s of Bay Head, the new restaurant/bar in town, as viewed from Twilight Lake. Its exterior was designed with the typical shore architecture of Bay Head in mind—cedar shingles, copper gutters, and weathered brick.

From the destruction of Superstorm Sandy in the quaint seaside village of Bay Head has risen a new landmark building. Charlie’s of Bay Head, located on Bridge Avenue and Twilight Lake at the former site of The Shoppers Wharf, is a full-service restaurant and bar—and the new centerpiece of the business district, which was flooded with water as high as seven feet during Superstorm Sandy.

Formally approved by the town fathers in late 2014, it’s been almost two years of planning and construction, and finally, Charlie’s is preparing for its grand opening later this year.

Charlie’s location is historic in itself, as it was constructed on the site of the former Lorraine Theater. Built by Albert C. Lewis, The Lorraine opened in 1917 as an “open-air” theater. A roof was added in 1920, and it became a regular movie house. The Lorraine was run by the Calvin Applegate family for years. When it first opened, an adult ticket cost fifteen cents. Supposedly, because the theater was located on Twilight Lake

and the “Scow Ditch” waterway, the floor of the front rows would fill with a few inches of water during extreme full moon high tides.

In the 1970s, the Lorraine was sold and converted into a group of shops, but its auditorium-style, sloped floor from its days as a theater remained. The Shoppers Wharf, as it became known, featured numer-

ous small boutiques on both sides of what was originally the main aisle of the theater. Over the years, it was home to a variety of stores including The Memory Shoppe, the Sea Glass Gallery, late artist Robert Loder’s Gull Studios, and The Chocolate Shoppe, to name a few. In 2012, the wooden structure was so severely damaged by the storm, it was deemed



The Lorraine Theater, circa 1925.

Courtesy of the Bay Head Historical Society (from the Schoettie Collection)



The Shoppers Wharf in 2011.

unsafe. It was razed in 2014, clearing the way for a new beginning.

Charlie's exterior was designed with the typical shore architecture of Bay Head in mind—cedar shingles, copper gutters, and weathered brick. The building reflects the welcoming, warmth of Bay Head.

Inside, natural light from numerous windows and French doors provides a peaceful aura for those who wish to unwind with a cocktail or enjoy a meal. The first floor boasts a twenty-two-seat bar and a fireplace lounge with seating for twenty-four, a dining area with seating for fifty-two, and an outdoor deck which will provide seasonal, outdoor dining. The second floor features a vaulted-ceiling and a dining room that seats sixty for both public dining and private functions. There is also a wine room for private dining and/or wine tastings as well as a bakery kitchen where desserts and ice cream will be made daily by an onsite pastry chef. Tranquil Twilight Lake provides beautiful water views from the dining rooms and deck area.

Charlie's menu features Contem-

porary American cuisine with seasonal and local fare, including Jersey Fresh vegetables and fruits, Atlantic seafood and East Coast Oysters, as well as other local specialty food products. Allen Brothers Angus Beef, a chilled seafood tower, and a number of fish, poultry, game, and vegetarian offerings will be on the menu

as well.

Executive Chef Stephen T. Johnson brings a lifetime of culinary experience to Charlie's. While Johnson was formally trained in classical French cuisine, he also has deep knowledge of both Mediterranean and Italian cuisines, flavors, and ingredients.

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David Turton Photography



The Shoppers Wharf after Superstorm Sandy.

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View of Charlie's from Bridge Avenue.

Johnson was Chef at Ivana's, Trump Plaza in Manhattan for seven years, Executive Sous Chef at Trump Marina in Atlantic City, and owner/operator of his own business, EliteCulinary, for the past four years. The General Manager, Dan Rappa, is American Sommelier Association educated.

Patrons can enjoy a glass of wine from an extensive selection, which includes organic, biodynamic, and sustainably farmed wines from California, France, and Italy. For the beer aficionado, Charlie's will fea-

ture twenty craft beers on tap, with selections changing with the seasons. Kane Brewing Company from Ocean Township and Carton Brewing from Atlantic Highlands are two local, award-winning breweries that will be available, along with many other local micro brews. The comfortable bar area will offer artfully crafted cocktails, as well as three wide screen televisions. The lounge area adjacent to the bar is complete with a cozy fireplace and an additional wide screen TV.

Charlie's of Bay Head hopes to be a new favorite year-round restaurant for casual dining, cocktails, and special events. Initially open for dinner only, plans to offer both lunch and brunch are in the future.

—Jill Ocone



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JERSEY SHORE PLACES

CRAZY FOR CRANBERRIES, continued from page 65

dren to choose farming, not inherit it. "It's a little bit of a problem for a farmer to find succession," admits Darlington. "Farming is very much a lifestyle." Conner adds, "The farm comes before your family. Twenty-one families depend on us... We do look for young people we can get into this."

In the meantime, Pine Barrens Native Fruits promotes their farm, and their passion, by spreading the word through education, tours, and of course, recipes. Indeed, the final leg of our tour includes a cooking demo from Conner's daughter, Emily. We try cranberry Brie bites, cranberry-orange relish, and cranberries with caramel. Recipes are all provided in a free booklet we take home and then there is the store...jars of cranberry salsa and cranberry walnut jam beckon...

"This highly exceeded my expectations," comments Gina Cobianni of Randolph, New Jersey, who went on the tour with her best friend and their three children. "I've lived here for fifty-two years and have never been to the Pine Barrens. I'm a total foodie, and this covered the history and importance of New Jersey agriculture. It was fun and interesting," Conner adds as a final note "To help us stay alive, go native!" ♦

Pine Barrens Native Fruits is located at 1 Pasadena Road in Browns Mills. Tours are offered during the harvest in October and reservations are required. Visit www.pbnf.com; call 888-272-6264; or email: tours@pbnf.com.

Historic Whitesbog Village is just a five minutes drive from Pine Barrens Native Fruits. It's located at 120 West Whitesbog Road in Pemberton Township. From Route 530 (Lakehurst Road) enter the village at mile marker 13. Part of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, Whitesbog includes the village and surrounding three thousand acres of cranberry bogs, blueberry fields, reservoirs, sugar sand roads, and Pine Barrens forests. The Village buildings are open only for scheduled events, pre-arranged tours, and by special request. For more information, visit www.whitesbog.org or call the office at (609) 893-4646.