

## **Salem in Oregon History a Walkers' Guide**

**2 miles**

Begin at the Mission Mill Museum of Willamette Heritage Center

Leave by the gate on Mill Street. Across the street is the Tokyo International University in America, a part of Willamette University since 1989. This was formerly Del Monte Cannery property.

Turn right, toward 12<sup>th</sup> Street, passing under the student skyway connecting two parts of Willamette University.

In the early years of Salem history, 12th Street was on the far edge of town, then expanding along the Willamette River, a mile to the west. When the railway station was constructed here in 1871 along the existing Oregon & California Railroad track, it was considered “too far out of town to be useful”. However, it soon provided not only passenger transportation, but service to the canneries.

Turn left and walk along 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the station. The third in this location (the other two burned), it is now on the AMTRAK route. Walk through the handsome 1930s lobby and out the back door to the tracks. In 1941-2 this was the departure point for local families of Japanese descent who left Salem on their way to relocation camps.

Return to Bellevue Street and make the three-way cross of 12<sup>th</sup> Street. On the north side, walk past two sides of the Willamette University athletic field and follow the path into the campus entrance at the 1989 Hatfield Fountain. The symbolism of the eagle's nest is explained in the Biblical quotation on the plaque, north of the fountain.

As you walk toward the center of the campus, the Hatfield Library is to your right. A collection of memorabilia donated by Senator Mark Hatfield is displayed on the second floor.

After crossing the bridge over Mill Creek, continue to an intersection of paths, taking the one to your right. Ahead of you to the right is the Theater. To the left is Walton Hall on the site where the original 1844 Oregon Institute building once stood. An interpretive marker is here.

Retrace your steps back to the intersection of paths, taking the one to your right. Walk around to the front of the brick Eaton Building, built in 1908-9 with a \$50,000 grant from Mr. A.E. Eaton, the owner of Union Woolen Mills. It was remodeled in 1983.

This path leads to Waller Hall. Cone Chapel on the second floor was once a Methodist sanctuary. It now hosts educational meetings as well as religious services. Inquire within (on south side) if you would like to visit the chapel.

As you pass the Waller Building, you will see the “star trees” planted in the 1940s during a centenary celebration. Stand in the middle of the trees and look up to see the star formation. The Capitol Building is across State Street.

Turn left and walk back toward Mill Creek. Turn right to Winter Street, then right again walking to Lausanne Hall, named for the ship that brought a reinforcement of missionaries to Oregon in 1842. Formally on this site was the home of pioneers William and Chloe Willson. It was moved here in 1881 from its original location on Court Street. Used as a dormitory for women until 1919, it was replaced by this building in 1920.

Walk to State Street. On the corner to your right is the historic 1907 Oregon Medical School. From 1913 to 1920 it housed the Willamette Academy, a college preparatory school. Other departments occupied the building until 1977. The Department of Art moved in following a major renovation.

Willson Park, between State and Court Street, is ahead of you.

Turn left and cross Winter Street to the 1912 Carnegie Library. In 1972 the library moved to the Civic Center complex and this building became part of the YWCA. In 2007 it was purchased by Willamette University and remodeled for their Oregon Civic Justice Center.

Further along in this block, four floors of the 1930s Art Deco Northwest Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Building tower above the

neighboring Hallie Ford Museum of Art. The 1960s portion of the Bell Telephone Building has been converted into this Willamette University art museum containing a collection of Northwest Native American artifacts and works of Oregon artists. There is an admission charge except on Tuesday.

Crossing Cottage Street, the beautiful window above the entrance of the former BPOE Club gave a view from the elegant ballroom. This building was constructed in 1925 and occupied by the Elks until 1993 when it was purchased by the church and renamed Micah.

At Church Street, the 185-foot steeple of the United Methodist Church is the tallest structure in Salem. This 1878 church is Salem's heritage from our pioneer missionaries and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The church sanctuary was placed on the second level of this building because of Willamette River flooding.

In the center of the block between Church and High Streets (to your left), stands the back wall of the 1926 Capitol Theater, demolished in 2000.

Continue to the intersection of State and High Streets, an important urban center of Salem before World War II. Cross to the 1913 Hubbard Building, on the southwest corner. It was the original Salem depot for the Oregon Electric Railway, whose Salem-to-Eugene tracks ran on High Street. From 1908 to 1933, this inter-urban rail line traveled between Portland to Salem 33 times a day at a cost of twenty-five cents. Consider the city services available from here: the Masonic Hall and the Marion County Courthouse were at this corner. The Ellsinore Theater is in the next block to the south. The City Hall and Senator Hotel were one block north, the Post Office and First Methodist Church one block east, State House and Willamette University just beyond. The train service ended during the Depression and the tracks covered or removed in subsequent re-paving. From this corner, two blocks east at Liberty Street, is our only skyscraper, popularly known as the Livesly Building. It rises to an elaborately embellished 11<sup>th</sup> floor exterior. The Salem Downtown

Historic District begins at this corner and extends to Front Street along the Willamette River.

Walk north on High Street.

To your right is the present Marion County Courthouse that replaced an ornate, 1885 Victorian building demolished in 1952. A newspaper comment of that time, reflecting residents' opinion of the new modern structure, remarked, "a wedding cake had been replaced by a cake box."

To your left is the Hotel Annex of the Oddfellows Lodge and the Grand Theater. These buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places.

At Court Street turn right and walk one block to Church Street. On your right is the Federal Building. It replaced the elegant Post Office, which was moved to the Willamette campus. You will see it as the Gatke Building later in this walk.

Continue east to Cottage Street. On the northwest corner (where is now a brick building) there stood the home of Eugene Breyman, one of Salem's most prominent merchants. Directly south one block, on the corner of Cottage and State, stood the home of his brother, Walter. (The Micah Building stands there now). A lawn at the rear of the Post Office stretched between the homes. Across Cottage Street, on the east side, the brothers erected a memorial to soldiers of the Spanish American War. Cross the street and enter Willson Park there.

The 1904 Breyman Fountain (actually a water trough) was for both horses and dogs. The original decorative statue at the top fell off and was never replaced. It was possibly melted down during one of the World War II scrap metal drives.

A bandstand has always been a part of Willson Park. This one has been moved to a new location and is now not as prominent in Salem summer entertainment. The fountain ahead is the replacement for the historic

Waite Fountain, destroyed by the windstorm of 1962. Colored lights on the former fountain entertained nighttime park visitors for many years.

Choose the path to the left. The beaver, an early symbol of Oregon, is seen here in a family statuary group. The circle of flags commemorates our 50 states. Tributes to Native American tribes have recently been added.

Walk to Court Street to see the Oregon State Library, the first of the four buildings constructed on the mall. Between 1937 and 1957, replacing the dignified residential neighborhood of Piety Hill. Many fine homes of early Salem families were demolished. A few remain in new locations. The mall now extends north to D Street, an additional four blocks. The library was built on the site of the home of Thomas Kay, owner of the mill on 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

Walk to the front of the Capitol for a view of the statuary groups representing Oregon pioneers and their families. These frame the Capitol entrance. Step into the lobby to see the interior of the tower and continue to the Galleria to view historic photographs. Tours are available.

Oregon's Medal of Honor awards are commemorated both east and west of the front entrance to the Capitol.

This route passes the memorial statues dedicated to John McLaughlin and Jason Lee. A plaque describes the 1935 fire and displays fragments of columns from the 1935 fire that destroyed the former State House. A statue in honor of the Methodist Circuit Rider stands within a circle.

Continue on the path until Waverly Street and turn south to State Street. Look across to see the elegant Gatke Building of Willamette University that was originally the downtown Post Office at State and Church Streets. When a new Federal Building was planned for that site in 1963, this structure was purchased by WU moved here to be the School of Law and named for a distinguished professor. Imagine this stone structure wheeled on rollers for 5 city blocks to this destination: it took 6 months.

To your left is the 1914 Oregon Supreme Court Building. A beautiful lobby leads to the Court Chamber above. With permission, visitors are allowed to watch court proceedings and see the glass domed ceiling.

Continue walking to the Court and 12<sup>th</sup> Street intersection. Two blocks east is the 14th Street entrance to the Court-Chemeketa Historical Residential District. This was one of Salem's earliest residential neighborhoods. A self-guided walking tour is provided at Mission Mill Museum.

Cross State Street and then 12<sup>th</sup> Street..

Canning fruit products were an important industry in early Salem. In 1887 Robert S. Wallace was instrumental in securing land on 12<sup>th</sup> Street for the development of a fruit evaporator. The site provided rail car loading and access to the millrace crossing the property. A cannery operated at this site under various ownerships until 1935. The site of the cannery is now the parking lot across the street on the Willamette University campus.

A small building to the south of Ferry Street was the office of the Mill. In the 1950s, the Marion County Historical Society was established and has had its headquarters here for over 50 years.

Enter the 12<sup>th</sup> Street gate, unless it is Sunday when the gate is closed and you will need to enter on Mill Street. A tour of the mill is available as well as tours of four historic Salem properties moved to this site to preserve them.

Thank you for taking this walk! We hope it will remind you of the important place Salem holds in Oregon history.