

Message from the Interim Director, Sam Shogren

A Strange Time for History

Are you as surprised as I am concerning recent events unfolding within the heritage and cultural community both here in Oregon and in the rest of the nation? The initial withholding of funding from museums in President Obama's economic stimulus plan was a bit of a surprise; one that was eventually corrected. While the announced closure of the Library and Archives at the Oregon Historical Society, the suspension of operations by Clackamas Heritage Partners, and the removal of \$1.8 million in donations from the Oregon Cultural Trust are a shock.

What are we to make of these events? One characteristic that defines the Great Depression is the explosion in artistic and cultural creativity that occurred. The photographs of Dorothea Lange, the murals created by the Works Progress Administration or the musicals produced in Hollywood are all testaments to the creativity of the period. The history of the Great Depression shows us that economic stress unleashes both artistic expression and an increased desire within the public to escape into a world refashioned or revisioned by arts and culture. This is the place museums, such as the Washington County Museum, occupies in these troubling economic times. It is my personal expectation that we will see an increase in visits to museums nation-wide as families take "vacations" in their own backyards seeking low cost or no cost alternatives in family entertainment.

For us this means that the staff and the supporters of the Washington County Museum must work even harder to create a community gathering place that attracts and welcomes all aspects of our highly diverse population. And, in fact, the Museum's Board of Directors was already working in this direction prior to the deepening of economic downturn.

As a result, I have a number of important announcements to share with our members and supporters.

A Better Name and a New Mission

In the past two months, following an extensive strategic planning process, the Museum's Board has chosen to change our doing business name (dba) to just the Washington County Museum removing the term "historical society" from the name only, but not from our focus as a collecting organization, to attract a broader audience. The mission statement was revised to reflect a broader view of history, to be more inclusive and mirror the changing demographics occurring in the County. The new mission statement reads:

"The Washington County Museum ignites the imagination, actively engaging the public in learning how history, art, technology and our innovative pioneering spirit

have shaped today's communities-bringing to life the diverse cultures that have so richly defined this remarkable region."

New Members Campaign & American Heritage Magazine

Membership renewal letters will begin hitting mailboxes around the County very soon. Please take a moment to fill yours out and renew your membership.

And in recognition of the changes noted above with a new name and mission, and effects the current economic times we are having the ability of foundations to give to museums, we are starting two new fund development campaigns.

Our Ben Franklin Society campaign is to attract 100 new or renewing members each giving at the \$100 level or higher. These members will receive special recognition at the Museum plus they will receive a year's subscription to American Heritage Magazine. If you have not done so already, please renew or increase your membership today! If each current member can get at least one new member at this level we will stabilize our current funding situation for the spring and beginning building towards the future.

The other campaign we are launching is to build our base of Major Donors who significantly advance the mission of the Museum through both in-kind and cash contributions. If you, or someone you know, wish to deepen your relationship please contact either Clarinda or Sam at the Museum. Your gift today, over and above any giving you have done in the past, is critical to the current and future success of the Museum.

Family Days--Now a Monthly Event

In partnership with Print Arts Northwest and other community partners, the Museum's Education Department will begin offering monthly Family Days the last Saturday of each month. The success of the first Family Day in January (close to 200 new museum visitors with over half being children) highlighted the need and demand for family activities at the Museum. We are excited to offer these Family Days to the community and look forward to greater success!

Do you own a business? Are you seeking a new market? We are still seeking business sponsors to underwrite the cost of the Family Day events. Please let us know if you would like to become a business partner and help fund educational activities for Washington County's children.

Stewards Committee & Government Affairs Committee

The Washington County Museum not only needs your financial support today, we need your time as well. Please consider increasing your involvement by joining the Museum as a Steward or helping us develop a Government Affairs Committee. We have two goals. (1) To develop a pool of talented museum supporters who can publicly advocate on behalf of the museum before their friends and neighbors, and volunteer their time to the museum. (2) To create a support group or committee that will advocate for the Museum before the various governmental units in Washington County, and be the eyes and ears for the Museum helping keep our Board informed about developments within local governments.

We are working hard to fulfill our new name and new mission. Your support today

is invaluable to our success. Thank you for your past support. I look forward to hearing from you soon concerning your renewal of support for the Museum.

Sam Shogren
Interim Executive Director

Discovery Days!

March 24, 25 & 26 from 10a.m. to 3p.m.

Come join the fun during Spring Break at the Washington County Museum for a 3-day escape filled with art, science and history activities. Take part in make-it and take-it activities, enjoy storytelling presentations and learn from hands-on demonstrations.

Admission is \$5 per child per day, parent participation is required. You are welcome to bring a sacked lunch. Recommended for grades K-5.



Please RSVP to Scott at scott@washingtoncountymuseum.org or 503-645-5353

Upcoming Lecture

March Crossroads Lecture

"Beaverton School District 48: The First 25 Years"

with George Russell

Wednesday, March 18

3:30-4:30p.m.

George Russell will recall his 32-year career as a teacher, principal, and district administrator in the Beaverton School District. Russell will highlight the prominent program achievements and failures as well as the people who were involved in creating them.



Lectures are held at the Washington County Museum. Admission is free to WCHS members, PCC faculty, staff, and students. Adults \$3 & seniors \$2.

Save the Date!

You are invited to join in the celebration of the first annual
"A Taste of Washington County"

Honoring Washington County Centenarians
Barbara Peck and Curtis Tigard

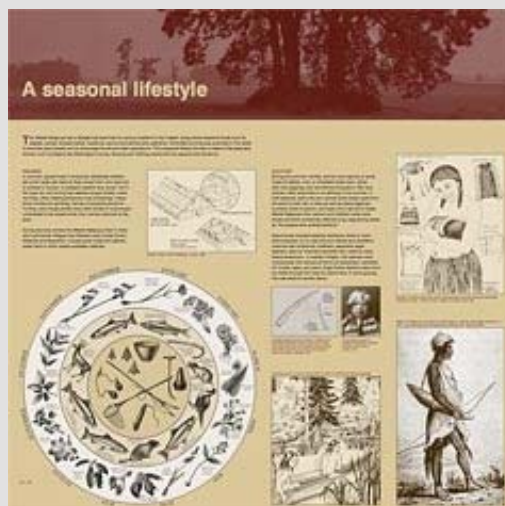
Thursday, May 28, 2009, 6 pm at the Washington County Museum

Reception and dinner include a wine and food tasting featuring Washington County wines, restaurants and caterers. Tickets to attend are \$50 per person.

For reservations, call Clarinda at 503-629-7094 or
clarinda@washingtoncountymuseum.org

Exhibits

The 1853 Washington County log jail building has been moved out of the Collins Gallery in the museum and onto the concrete pad outside. This will allow for more exhibit opportunities in our gallery. It will also increase the visibility of this historic building that has been under our stewardship since 2002.



We are pleased to announce that our popular *This Kalapuya Land* traveling exhibit will be landing at the Washington County Museum. The traveling panels will be on display after March 13, 2009 and the full exhibit with artifacts will officially open on May 28, 2009.

This Kalapuya Land chronicles the lives and culture of Native Americans living in the Willamette Valley. It explains detailed aspects of Kalapuya life including food, clothing, housing, and trading practices. Important events in tribal history such as treaties with the American Government, removal to the Grand Ronde Reservation, tribal Termination and Restoration are also illustrated.

