



**Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill
(WHC) Receives IMLS Matching Grant
in the Amount of \$137,730 for the
New Exhibits,
*Preserving our Heritage, Sharing Our Stories:
A History of the Mid-Willamette Valley,*
in Three Historic Houses**

For Immediate Release

The Willamette Heritage Center is the proud recipient of a Museums for America grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services in the amount of \$137,730. This is a matching grant and WHC will need to raise \$139,344 with community support.

The Center's plan to reinterpret and develop new exhibitry for the site's Three Historic Houses will update and change the focus of the Center's early settlement houses (The Lee House, The Parsonage, and The Boon House) to bring them in line with the WHC's new vision. The grant also enables the WHC to combine excellence in preservation and scholarship with high-quality exhibits and programs that serve a diverse public. The new exhibit project, *Preserving our Heritage, Sharing Our Stories*, will interpret the history of the people, families, and community of the mid-Willamette Valley. The WHC will be a resource for area teachers, students and visitors to understand their community's heritage, gain more access to historic collections and have opportunities to engage and explore history.

Creation of the new first floor galleries in the Lee House begins the first week in January, 2012. WHC members are invited for a sneak peak on February 16 from 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm to see the progress during the WHC's Annual Meeting.

"This is an exciting time for the Willamette Heritage Center and we are honored to receive this recognition," said Peter Booth, Executive Director. "This grant, with community support, will allow us to leverage new dollars to make our reinterpretation and new exhibitry of mid-Willamette Valley history a reality."

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.ims.gov.

For more information about the grant or how you can help, contact the Willamette Heritage Center, 503-585-7012 or visit <http://www.willametteheritage.org>.

The Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill, a unification between Mission Mill Museum and Marion County Historical Society, is a stroll through the history of the Willamette Valley. Its 5-acre campus is home to the 1841 Jason Lee house (arguably the oldest wooden framed house in Oregon), 1841 Willamette Mission Parsonage, 1847 John Boon home, 1858 Pleasant Grove Church and the 1896 Thomas Kay Woolen Mill, named an *American Treasure* by the National Park Service. Since its founding in 1964 as a private non-profit association, Mission Mill Museum has

established a reputation as a leader in the preservation and interpretation of Oregon's history. The museum's histories are shared with visitors through daily and group tours, speakers, living history, children's programs, hands-on activities, special events, the museum store and rental facilities. For more information call 503-585-7012 or visit www.willametteheritage.org.

The Willamette Heritage Center is a private not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. It is not managed by city, county, state or federal agencies.

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