



Willamette Heritage Center *at The Mill* Presents October Events For Immediate Release

2001 Speaker Series - October 2011

As the days grow cooler, rainier and darker, and Halloween draws near, thoughts often turn to the morbid or the supernatural. In October, the Center is thrilled to have graduate students and faculty from Western Oregon University offering insights into those darker, more mysterious sides of human nature.

Costs: Each individual Saturday in the series is \$3 for members and students, \$5 for non-members.

Saturday, October 8: 3:00 - 4:30 P.M.

They Always Get Their Man - Oregon State Police Seeking Real and Imagined Murders, 1943-1945

Presented by: Dr. Max Geier, Western Oregon University

Cost: \$3 members and students, \$5 non-members.

Location: Willamette Heritage Center *at the Mill*, 1313 Mill Street SE, Salem, OR, 97301

Contact: 503-585-0712 or www.willametteheritage.org.

During World War II, the Oregon State Police (OSP) was a relatively young agency, still trying to establish an image and culture of 'professionalism' and 'scientific' police work. In two sensationalized murder investigations in early 1943, Dr. Joseph Beeman, Forensic Pathologist for the OSP led two manhunts that resulted in two wartime executions in a state previously renowned for its early opposition to the death penalty. Both cases prompted frenzied petitions for clemency, raising questions about the likely innocence of the condemned. The cases reopened concerns about the legitimacy of the death penalty but solidified the reputation of the OSP as the standard for professional policing in Oregon.

Saturday, October 15: 3:00 – 4:30 P.M.

1844 Oregon Territory: Murder and Race Relations

Presented by: History Masters Student Samantha Reining

Cost: \$3 members and students, \$5 non-members.

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Champoeg Constable Joel Turnham's threat against the life of Mary Hauxhurst, Indian wife of Webley Hauxhurst, and Turnham's subsequent death, exemplify racial tensions present in the Oregon Territory. Join Reining as she leads us through the lives of the individuals involved in this case and sheds light on attitudes towards race, intolerance and violence in early Oregon.

Interpreting Guilt: The Oregon Supreme Court Case of Foot You

Presented by: History Masters Student Austin Schulz

The history of Chinese laborers in the West is one of prejudice, violence and inequality within the legal system. Upon arrival, Chinese immigrants were targets of personal violence, including crimes of arson, assault, robbery, burglary, kidnapping and murder. This anti-Chinese sentiment played a significant role in influencing the courts of the western U.S. as they dealt with cases involving Chinese immigrants and other

minorities. Schulz examines the 1892 Oregon Supreme Court case of Foot You, which illustrates how once Chinese immigrants were charged with a crime they had little chance of receiving a fair trial.

The Case of Emma Hannah: From Prison to Asylum

Presented by: History Masters Student Diane Huddleston

In 1895 Emma Hannah, a resident of Lebanon, Oregon, was convicted of murder and condemned to life in prison, but she spent much of her sentence in the Oregon State Hospital. Around 1900, many viewed life in prison as a "civil death," but a life sentence in the asylum as being "buried alive." Huddleston brings a fascinating story of a woman's life that has broader implications in examining Americans' shift in philosophy of punishment and separation via prisons and asylums, and how this view has influenced our imagination of the horror of institutionalization.

Saturday, October 22: 3:00 – 4:30 P.M.

Society's Reaction to the Harry Tracy Murder Spree

Presented by: History Masters Student Jeffrey Sawyer

Cost: \$3 members and students, \$5 non-members.

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In summer of 1902, Harry Tracy escaped from the Oregon State Penitentiary and eluded the law for the next two months. Over this period, he headed north to Seattle, robbing, taking hostages, murdering lawmen and civilians, and capturing America's attention. Sawyer shares his study of the public's fascination with this man and his murder spree, which elevated Tracy to the status of celebrity. He also looks at why society is attracted to and absorbed by violence, murder and the outlaw "on the run."

Interpreting Horror: Oregon News and Lynchings Between 1900-1910

Presented: by History Masters Student Toni Rush

Lynching, an event that occurs outside the influence of the law, was mainly practiced on Africa American and mostly in the South. But how did people in the Pacific Northwest interpret and react to these lynchings? And what does that reaction tell us about Oregonians of the time? Rush explores how Oregon newspapers reported lynching from 1900-1910 and shares her understandings of Oregonians' popular opinions of these events at that time, and what that reveals about race relations in Oregon in the early 20th century.

Saturday, October 29: 3:00 – 4:30 P.M.

The Witch's Garden: The Hidden Meaning of Fairy Tales

Presented by: Dr. Curtis Yehnert, Western Oregon University

Cost: \$3 members and students, \$5 non-members.

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Western fairy tales have a fascinating history, as they are shaped through their transition from oral folk tale, to literary fairy tale, to mass media and animated film. Folklorist Curtis Yehnert will focus primarily on the so called romantic, and magical, fairy tales, such as Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, Beauty and the Beast and Cinderella. Fairy tales create profound and enduring childhood impressions, as they delve into the deep-rooted wishes, needs and fears of children. Yehnert discusses the history of fairy tales, exploring the ways that they help children make sense of their feelings and understand themselves in a complex world.

An Evening with Gwen Carr: "Perseverance: A History of African Americans in Oregon's Marion and Polk Counties"

Thursday, October 6, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

COST: Free

Location: Willamette Heritage Center *at the Mill*, 1313 Mill Street SE, Salem, OR, 97301

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Many Oregonians believe that black people first came to Oregon during World War II, when the Portland shipyards were hiring workers from across the nation. "Black people have played a part in Oregon's history since the late 1700's," states Gwen Carr. "They were among the Mid-Valley's early pioneers."

The book "Perseverance: A History of African Americans in Oregon's Marion and Polk Counties" by Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers, covers personal profiles and African Americans' place in local history. The book is entitled "Perseverance" because in spite of laws that for decades barred black people from the state, at peril of lashing, some determined black people made their living and raised families here.

"When you know your history, it gives you a sense of ownership of who you are," said Carr. "My grandchildren and others need to learn that Oregon was built by people of many races."

Sheridan McCarthy of Meadowlark Publishing in Corvallis assisted the Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers, serving as coach, mentor, consultant and eventually as the writer who coaxed varied submissions into a single voice. Despite the extent of her help, McCarthy solely credits Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers for authoring the book.

The Oregon Northwest Black Pioneers has other projects in the works. They will be collaborating on a show at Bend's High Desert Museum in February 2012; and contributing an article to the Fall 2012 Oregon Historical Quarterly. Plans are ongoing for an Oregon African-American Museum in Salem.

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 <http://www.missionmill.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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