



**Willamette Heritage Center *at The Mill* Receives
Two Matching Grants for New Exhibits,
Saving our Heritage, Sharing our Stories:
A History of the Mid-Willamette Valley,
in the Three Historic Houses**

For Immediate Release

The Willamette Heritage Center *at The Mill* (WHC) is the proud recipient of two matching grants.

Trust Management Services awarded the WHC \$10,000 to support the new Women and Children's exhibits and the Oregon Heritage Commission awarded the WHC \$10,000 for the new Kalapuya gallery. All of these new exhibits, each featuring hands-on activities, will be installed in the Methodist Parsonage, and will open to the public in May 2013.

These two grants will be used as part of the funding needed to match the \$137,730 Museums for America Grant that was awarded to the Center in 2011 by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The WHC will need to raise an additional \$100,000 with community support to complete the work of transforming the exhibits in the houses.

The WHC's plan to reinterpret and develop new exhibitry for the site's three Historic Houses (The Lee House, The Parsonage and The Boon House) will update and change the focus of the Center's early settlement displays to bring them in-line with the WHC's new vision. The grants also enable the Center to combine excellence in preservation and scholarship with high-quality exhibits and programs to better serve a diverse public. The new exhibit project, *Saving our Heritage, Sharing Our Stories*, will present the history of the people, families and communities of the Mid-Valley like it has never been told before. The WHC will be a resource for area teachers, students and visitors to understand their community's heritage, gain greater access to historic collections and have opportunities to engage with and explore history.

"We greatly appreciate the funding support from these grants," said Peter Booth, Executive Director. "With community support, the WHC will continue to be an exciting resource for future generations to learn about Mid-Willamette Valley history."

The first of the new exhibits, *Creating Community: The Canoe, The Cross and The Chalkboard*, is now open in the Lee House. The next to open will be *Shaping Identity: Salem's Roots*, showcasing lots of hands-on activities for people to explore. This will be in the Methodist Parsonage, and will be unveiled during next year's May Family Festival, *Sheep to Shawl*, when visitors will get their first chance to "Come Play in Our House."

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 <http://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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