



# Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation

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## Congress holds key to unlocking Willamette Falls Locks in 2008

*[Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation ED Sandy Carter serves on the steering committee for the Oregon Solutions Willamette Falls Locks working group and hosted meetings of the 30-person coalition in January and February, when things were decidedly more positive than the situation in November. Here, with permission, is the official OS update.]*

Congress has thrown a lifeline to the Willamette Falls Locks preservation and maintenance project. The “One Willamette” Coalition, led by Oregon Solutions and named for their efforts to maintain connection between the upper and lower Willamette River, has been working hard for the past two years to acquire adequate funding and legislative support for inspection and upkeep.

“If the locks close,” said the coalition’s convener Verne Duncan, “the Willamette permanently becomes two rivers for navigational purposes. That not only limits who can enjoy the water recreationally but who can traverse it commercially.”

Last month [December] Congress directed the Army Corps of Engineers to initiate a major safety inspection. The



Lower entrance to 135-year-old Willamette Falls multiple-chambered navigation lock and canal.

coalition and community leaders are currently working with the Corps to schedule the inspection, along with any necessary repairs. Two potential funding resources have been identified for future restoration assistance.

“We’re very optimistic about the future of the Willamette Falls Locks,” said Duncan. “A number of groups and people have come together to make this possible and the recently passed legislation breathes new life into the project. The Willamette River is such a valuable resource for Oregonians. We’re doing all we can to keep the locks open.”

As the oldest continuously operating multiple-lift navigation lock in the country, the locks hold historic significance here in the Northwest, as well as the potential to contribute significantly to commercial, travel, and recreation industries in the coming years. The river serves a wide range of watercraft, from recreational boats and kayaks to tour traffic and larger barges. This collaborative effort among community leaders will ideally lead to the acquisition of adequate funding for all repairs as well as for the lock’s long-term operations.



Upper level interior of the Hawley Power House at Willamette Falls during 2005 tour to weigh in on its fate. Unfortunately, the old power house is slated for decommissioning this year by PGE under a FERC order.

**Page 3: Friends, Fish and \$1.09 an Hour**

**More mill stories from Crown Zee, to be released on DVD March 1—PREORDER NOW!**

## News Briefs

- The Oregon Cultural Trust, which awarded the foundation a preservation grant in 2007 for transcription work on our Crown Zellerbach video oral history archive, will be featuring a photo from the project in its forthcoming publicity materials.
- ED Sandy Carter has been appointed to a three-year term on the West Linn Historic Resources Advisory Board, where she hopes to give a voice to the need for preservation and interpretation of the city's industrial heritage sites.
- Sandy will also be a speaker March 8 at another oral history workshop at the Holy Names Heritage Center, at 17425 Holy Names Drive, from 10-11:30 a.m. The public is invited.
- The City of Oregon City and the City of West Linn have each donated \$4,000 to our Locks National Historic Landmark (NHL) fund. We have \$1,300 on hand for that purpose, so if we receive a contribution from the Oregon Solutions 2007 carry-over, we will be very close to having enough to commission a consultant to prepare a high-quality NHL nomination for the locks this year.

# Director's Message

## "Embodied energy" and stewardship

Sustainability means different things to different people. To me it has meant sorting my discards for recyclables since 1977. It has meant keeping my modest cars until they hit a ripe old age; buying local produce; avoiding plastic containers; planting perennials, using a push mower, letting the lawn go brown and caulking the cracks under the eaves; conserving flushes and setting the night-time thermostat to 62 degrees in winter, among other things.

To the National Trust for Historic Preservation, according to a recent letter from that group, it means thinking of historic preservation as a "viable green-building practice." Right now, as West Linn works diligently on a nomination process for putting its historic Willamette area forward as a Historic District on the National Register, I think the concept of preservation as a sustainability strategy will be essential to the future of historic neighborhoods everywhere.

To quote more from the NTHP, "...older buildings can 'go green.' In fact, many are already green—constructed as they are with stone, brick, plaster, timber, copper and other quality materials, not to mention big, operable windows that provide natural light and ventilation... But the connection between sustainable living and preservation in many people's minds is a tenuous one at best."

"Some well-meaning spokespersons for green living advocate for tearing out historic

features such as windows, which could—in many cases—be made as energy efficient as their replacement counterparts. Worse yet, some advocate for tearing down older and historic buildings for newer models, without fully considering the consequences of the tons of debris they would consign to landfills, the loss of embodied energy in the existing building, or even the energy required to manufacture all of the components of the new building. The fact is, the razing of historic and older buildings renders the embodied energy of those places worthless."

"New buildings erected in the place of older ones are made with materials vastly more consumptive of energy: plastic, steel, vinyl and aluminum. Plus, studies show that embodied energy savings increase dramatically as a building's life stretches over 50 years. In other words, we waste more energy, not less, by demolishing well-built historic properties..."

"Our nation needs new policies at the federal, state, and local levels that promote the wise stewardship of existing built resources. We also need incentives that encourage architects, developers and property owners to recognize both the principle of 'embodied energy'—the total amount of energy used to create the building and the materials used to construct it—and how to evaluate the total 'life cycle' of a building when making decisions..."

Amen to that.

~ Sandy Carter

## Sternwheeler Ahoy!

Willamette Queen Sternwheeler evokes West Linn's past, pausing at Bernerts' Landing dock at Willamette Park in West Linn on her way from Salem to Portland Saturday, January 12. Her load of history-loving passengers disembarked here prior to the boat entering the locks. The sternwheeler had its once-every-five-years date with the Coast Guard for a mandated safety inspection at the CG dry dock, then returned to Salem on January 19th.



# Mill town history to be focus of public art

The nine members of West Linn's new Historic Grindstones Public Art Committee had their initial meeting January 28 at West Linn Paper Company, only slightly stymied by snow on the higher hills and driveways. Six of the nine members were able to get to the mill, where host Ian Dunlap treated them to a tour of the historic Mill A grinding room.

Attending were Ian, Sandy Carter (convener), Nancy Nye (facilitator from the Arts Action Alliance), Jonnel Covault (Oak Grove printmaker), Roger Shepherd (Parks Board representative and WFHF's Vice Chair), and Tom Neff (WL Historic Resources Advisory Board). Missing for weather and health reasons were Ken Worcester, City of West Linn; Jan Fowler, Lake Oswego public art representative; and Lynette Meadows, WL Art Commission.

The entire group met February 8th and agreed that the Public Art Committee's job is to commission the creation of a monument to West Linn's 110-plus year history of mill work, through the use of six huge pulping stones that were donated



UO architecture students were grateful for their January tour of the West Linn Paper Company's island mill, where they admired the handsome skeletal remains of this old steam plant.

to the city in 2007 for this purpose. This will be the city's first official "Percent for Art" project. Working with the city, the group will issue a design call in March and hopes to see the actual art in place somewhere in the city by late summer, 2009, as part of Oregon's 150th birthday celebration that year.

## Friends, Fish and \$1.09 an Hour – More Stories from Crown Zee

It's not a prequel or a sequel. The second Crown Zellerbach oral history DVD, to be released March 1, could be called, to borrow a phrase, 'The Rest of the Story', as it features four additional topic areas about the lives of mid-20th Century West Linn millworkers—topics that couldn't be squeezed by producer Sandy Carter into the first movie, completed in 2006. This new one-hour documentary reintroduces the seventeen individuals who shared their memories in "Grindstones, Boomsticks, Tattletales and Nips", looking this time out at stories of the West Linn Inn, fish and animal stories connected with the mill at the falls, and



J.D. Zellerbach at the podium in the West Linn Inn, photo from West Linn Paper Company photo archive, used with permission in "Friends, Fish and \$1.09 an Hour"

memories of the mill's social networks, completing our two-part look-back at mill work with some reflections on when and why our subjects retired.

Beginning Feb. 20, the foundation will accept pre-orders for this exciting new heritage film. Either movie may be ordered, at \$24.95 apiece, by mail or on our website, [www.willamettefalls.org](http://www.willamettefalls.org), through Pay Pal. Pre-sales may be mailed to the foundation at PO Box 311, Marylhurst, OR 97036, or you may call Sandy at 503.650.9570. All proceeds go to support the foundation's operations and future oral history work.

### WHO WE ARE

We are partners, stewards and advocates of the culture and heritage at Willamette Falls. Our mission is: To preserve and promote awareness of the magnificence and history at Willamette Falls so that it will live in the minds and imaginations of people of all ages.

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*Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit Oregon corporation established for educational purposes and heritage preservation.*

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# T.W. Sullivan Art Jam exhibit moves downtown

When Carole Morse, president of the PGE Foundation, came to our Artists' Reception at Providence Milwaukie's public gallery in December, she liked the T.W. Sullivan show so much that she wanted to take it 'home'—that is, to PGE's corporate headquarters in the World Trade Center in Portland. Small wonder, since the Sullivan hydropower plant, once known as Station B, is seen as the birthplace of today's PGE—the company that in its earlier incarnation had laid out the plans for the Willamette Falls neighborhood in the late 19th Century.

So Sandy Carter, curator of the "Art Contemplates Industry" exhibit, collected the Sullivan-focused art at the end of its 90-day run at Providence, dusted it off and worked with PGE staff to turn it into the new, temporary décor of the PGE Board Room, on the 17th floor of One World Trade Center.

Ms. Morse is planning a February reception for the exhibit, with invitations to the board of Portland's Regional Arts & Culture Council and other art and business VIPs. We're very grateful to Carole for this marvelous exposure of our first Industry & Art 'art jam' project. As a follow-up to the Sullivan event, Sandy has begun planning for the next art jam, focused on the historic Hawley Pulp and Paper Company (predecessor to Publishers' Paper in Oregon City) powerhouse at the north-east edge of Willamette Falls.

The Hawley event will help to memorialize the nearly 90-year-old building, which sits adjacent to the site of the incredibly historic Station A, which was torn down in approximately 1965. We must make the Hawley jam happen before the old powerhouse is decommissioned and taken down to



A dramatic monoprint of the Hawley powerhouse (second from left), as seen from the Sullivan plant, is one of the art works gracing the east wall of PGE's 17th floor Board Room in February.

its foundation this year under a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ruling.

We deeply regret that the decommissioning of Hawley could not be prevented and we hope that allowing artists to create art in its image will serve as a fitting memorial for this striking icon of the falls.

*[Note: We cannot express enough appreciation of Lisa Wilcox, artist and co-curator/inventor of the industrial art jam concept, without whom the Sullivan project could not have happened. Lisa donated her energy and professional graphic design talents to the production of classy event postcards and invitations and to the creation of our beautiful exhibit catalog.]*

## Partnership news

- Portland non-profits are working with that city to plan the first Portland River Fest for the last 10 days of summer 2008. Sandy attended a planning group meeting in January at the invitation of Jerry Van Winkle, a West Linn resident and member of the Columbia River Yachting Association, to explore opportunities for collaboration with Lock Fest (hopefully scheduled for September 13, 2008). Alas, the Portland festivities will end with Labor Day's Dragon Boat races on the Willamette River Fest will feature many car-free group activities on and near the river, and may, we hope, eventually inspire a larger, up- and down-valley river festival involving many communities.
- Dr. Stephen Duff, associate professor of architecture at the University of Oregon worked with Sandy in early January to make the contacts necessary to arrange an exciting field trip through the mills and power plants at Willamette Falls for 15 of his winter term students. The class will be developing ideas for possible creative uses/reuse of some part of

Moore's Island, and we look forward to seeing what it comes up with by Spring Break.

- Sandy met in January with Michael Asbill, a New York artist who has been selected by the County's Arts Action Alliance to create the new artistic concept for the renovation of the Oregon City Elevator. Sandy got to see the maquette or conceptual model of Asbill's proposal and shared many digital images of the falls and work in the mill that may find their way into the finished project.



### Inside: More Stories

Boat scene at Willamette Falls, from "Friends, Fish and \$1.09 an Hour". See page 3 for details.

Photo from West Linn Paper Company archive.