



Bringing
Out
The Best
In
Children

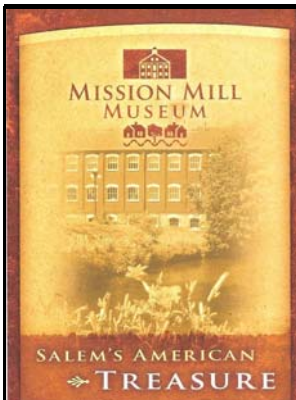
The SOC-KET

The weekly publication of the Optimist Club of Salem
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Ye Olde Editor — Wes Alderson

The Club meets every Thursday noon at Willson House
(check out our website at www.optimistclubofsalemor.org)

2007-08 Club Officers

President: Bruce Gilbertson
President-Elect: John Chamberlain
Immediate Past-President: Maur Horton
Secretary/Treasurer: Arlen Hollinshead
Directors: Maur Horton, Ray Thomas, Frank Masser,
Dave Sevall, Vern Tabery, Frank Milton



How much do you know about Oregon History or, more importantly, how much do you know about Salem's history? While the scheduled speaker for today was to have been Kent Sturgeon, the gentleman whose picture appears is Sean O'hara, Director of Operations at Mission Mill Museum.

One of the first questions that arose from the group had to do with the original date of the site. Any member who knew the correct date would be exempt from donating to the kitty when the fine pot came around. There were some wild guesses, but no one knew for certain. Following is a bit of information gleaned from a color brochure that was distributed at the meeting.

The Mission houses were constructed early in the 1840's, before the first wagon trains crossed the Oregon Trail. Jason Lee and his associates settled Salem, founded Willamette University, and advocated for the Oregon Territory (A fellow by the name of Joe Meek had a lot to do with the naming of the Oregon Territory, but that is a whole different story—not to be confused with Mission Mill). The houses provide a look into missionary and family life when these early founders were putting down roots in the Willamette Valley.

The Mill story "fleece to fabric" interprets 19th century technology used when Thomas Lister Kay brought wool manufacturing to Salem. The mill is a classic example of industrialization that brought vital jobs to the region. His legacy is still perpetuated today by Pendleton Woolen Mills, owned and operated by Kay's descendants.

Mission Mill was actually built in 1889, only to be destroyed by fire in 1896, and a new building constructed in 1890. In 1929 the mill was at full bore. During WWII the mill employed over 30 persons, a goodly share of them female. Regrettably the mill was forced to close in 1962. Synthetic materials had become commonplace and the demand for woolen goods diminished to the degree that operating the mill was no longer sufficiently profitable.

Nevertheless, the buildings were still there and no one wanted to see them destroyed. Other buildings of a historical nature were subsequently moved onto the 5-acre site. Among them was Jason Lee's home, built in 1841, brought onto the property and restored in 1965. The Methodist parsonage, also dating back to 1841, was moved onto the property in 1966.

The Dye House collapsed and was rebuilt. There is still some hand weaving done at that site, with a dozen or so women still very much involved. Several volunteer organization hold their regular meetings on that site. (continued top of next column)

No story would be complete without a little history about the gentleman who presented the story. Although having traveled extensively over the years, Sean O'hara calls Salem home. He attended McKay High School, Chemeketa Community College, & Oregon State University. At one time he had aspirations toward the Forest Service, preferring the outdoors. For a time he took classes at UNLV, in Nevada. He has been in New York, Delaware, and Minnesota, but wanted to return to the Pacific Northwest. After returning, he was with Salem Convention and Visitors Bureau for a while, but was approached by someone connected with Mission Mill and offered the position he holds at this time.

Sean is a very outgoing person and it has been a pleasure meeting him. He invited members to the club to come to Mission Mill where he will be pleased to provide a personal tour of the grounds.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

June 12 Diane Childs Oregon Dept. Of
Human Resources
June 19 TBA



CONTINUING TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE

As was said last week, there is still a month and a half before the club members need to think about selling cookies, but it is a good idea to be thinking about it ahead of time, and making allowances for the various shifts that need to be filled. Set-up is scheduled for **Thursday, July 17**. Every member of the club, and any interested recruits, should be noting this event on their calendars.

Maur Horton began circulating a signup sheet at Thursday's meeting (May 15). There are shifts to be filled for Thursday's setup as well as three separate shifts for Friday, Saturday, & Sunday. In case there should be someone out there who has not sampled the cookies, they are scrumptious.



Just another reminder that will be included in the bulletin until such time as it is no longer necessary. This fundraiser will be coming up in the not too distant future (September, if you recall). The logo should be enough to tell you what it is. The dates are to be September 11 - 14. More information will be forthcoming as this event gets closer.



Last week's note about this event was more than a little vague, so here's the latest. Jerry will be participating in this event on Saturday, June 14, the Chemeketa track. He is currently accepting pledges on behalf of the American Cancer Society. Here is an opportunity for you to do your bit for a worthy cause.

PUN TIME AGAIN

The dead batteries were given out free of charge.

A dentist and manicurist fought tooth and nail.

A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.

What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead giveaway)