



**The Willamette Heritage Center at The Mill (WHC) Announces New Exhibit:  
*Treasures from the Trunk: Quilts and Their Makers After the Oregon Trail Journey***

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**WHAT:** *Treasures from the Trunk: Quilts and Their Makers After the Oregon Trail Journey*  
Curator: Mary Bywater Cross, renowned quilt historian  
**WHEN:** Friday, September 23 – Saturday, December 24  
**WHERE:** 1313 Mill Street SE, Salem, OR 97301  
**COST:** FREE with museum admission.

Between 1840 and 1870 thousands of women arrived in the Northwest by way of the Oregon Trail. Stored away for months in trunks specially built to protect them from the hazards of weather, rivers, fire and dust, heirloom quilts found new homes in Oregon.

*Treasures of the Trunk* explores the inventiveness of these women, their eye for color and design, as well as the stories of where they came from, where they were going and what happened along the way.

The WHC working with leading quilt historian, Mary Bywater Cross, has pulled together a monumental collection of sixteen historic quilts that either came over the Oregon Trail or were made by survivors of the Journey. These quilts are beautiful creations, but even more moving are the stories that accompany them.

- One quilt from the WHC collection is called **Wandering Foot**. Made by Nancy A.A. Williamson in 1860, she carried it across the Oregon Trail in 1864 as her family fled the Civil War caused violence of conflict-ridden and strife-torn Missouri.
- Then there is the **Snail's Trail** quilt from OHS by "Grandma Stone," who came across the trail in 1853 and quilted for 70 years, during which time she opened her home to eleven motherless children.
- The **Birds of Flight** quilt, from the SOHS, was possibly pieced together by the women of the Maximilla Riddle family as they crossed the Trail in 1850.
- **Road to California**, from a private collection, was made by a wife whose husband had left her and "wandered" to the California Gold Fields.
- A hallmark of the exhibition is the **Oregon Pioneer Ribbon Quilt** from the American Folk Art Museum in New York. Made by trail survivor Elizabeth Ann Clark Kelly, it is made up of commemorative ribbons from the Oregon Pioneer Association. There are also badges from other associations the maker was involved with including the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, the Oregon State Grange, the Grand Army of the Republic, and more. This one quilt is rich in history that is fascinating.

Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy these and many more stories that blend heritage and beauty.

This exhibition sponsored in part by a City of Salem TOT grant, Greenbaum's Quilted Forest, the Mid-Valley Quilt Guild, Salem FiberArts Guild, and Mary Bywater Cross.

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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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