



Willamette Heritage Center *at The Mill* and Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde Announce the Gifting of the Oldest Known Kalapuya Canoe

For Immediate Release

The Willamette Heritage Center *at The Mill* (WHC) had in its collection the oldest Kalapuya river canoe in the Willamette Valley. After careful consideration and discussion, the Museum Advisory Board and the Board of Directors of the WHC will offer the canoe and its related exhibit case as a gift to the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde.

"There are several reasons why WHC decided to gift the canoe," said Peter Booth, Executive Director of WHC. "The Tribes were desiring to restore as much of their heritage as possible. We wanted to honor that desire by returning the canoe to its rightful owners. Also, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde can provide a safe and secure environment for the canoe, and much of the future resources of WHC will be dedicated to other areas."

The canoe is housed in a glass case, located in the Confederated Tribes Governance Building. The case was designed by WHC board member Ed Austin, who is a professional museum exhibit designer; and funded at a cost of some \$10,000 by William and Judy Meiers of Salem, supporters of the WHC.

"The Tribes are planning a museum and the WHC is proud to assist our neighbors in that effort with this significant gift," stated Booth. "Also, the donation of the money for the new canoe case was previously given to us with the understanding that the canoe was going to the tribe. This gift will further build a close relationship between WHC and the Tribes."

"This is a time when many wrongs are being set right," said Cheryle Kennedy, Chairwoman of the Grand Ronde Tribe. "With this gift, healing continues for both of us. It is an honorable, righteous deed."

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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