The Willamette Heritage Center’s (WHC) 5 ½ acre site preserves 15 historic structures, and is home to 10 tenants, and 12 artists that rent space from us. The WHC is central to the Mid-Willamette Valley past, present, and future. This land was home to the Kalapuya before Euro-American missionaries and immigrants began settling the area in the 1840s. Both local and visitors from abroad can learn more about the rich history and diverse cultural heritage of the Mid-Willamette Valley through tours, exhibits, educational programs, and our archives located on site.

Mission | Connecting generations by preserving and interpreting Mid-Willamette Valley history.

Vision | A place for all to discover, engage, and make history.

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Attendance | The WHC welcomed 14,458 guests for museum/school tours, WHC events, and event rentals.

Museum guests came from at least 27 states, and 12 countries.

*Event rentals include weddings, celebrations of life, office parties, and more, which brought in 10,415 for a total of 14,458 guests to our site!*
Collections

Collections received a remarkable number of donations in 2020 and catalogued thousands of new items into the WHC’s database.

Milestones:

Due to the pandemic, we were only able to have our volunteer workforce on site for the first three months of the year. Staff were only able to catalog less than 1/3 and inventory and rehouse about 1/5th of what we would normally do in a year with volunteer help!

By the Numbers:

- 37 donations of new material were processed into the museum’s collections.
- 824 items were newly catalogued last year! This includes new donations and cataloging materials that have never been catalogued before.
- 1,117 items were inventoried and rehoused by staff and volunteers.

The WHC now has:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>23,904</th>
<th>49,790</th>
<th>4,640</th>
<th>8,353</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>artifacts</td>
<td>photographs</td>
<td>series of archival records</td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

catalogued and accounted for in our collections management database.

A Sample of New Acquisitions in 2020:

- 23,904 artifacts
- 49,790 photographs
- 4,640 series of archival records
- 8,353 books

Education

The WHC welcomed 378 individuals to our site in 2020 to participate in educational activities and programs, tour the historic houses, mill buildings, and special exhibits.

Scheduled group tours:

- 2 groups visited from locations around the state
- These groups included 20 adults and seniors (65+)

Scheduled school/youth tours:

- 13 groups from public, charter, and private schools, along with home school groups, and youth programs
- These groups included 358 youth in pre-kindergarten through high school

Summer Programs:

- 5 youth between ages 8 and 12 attended one week of the summer camp “Before Oregon”
- 8 youth between ages of 11 and 18 attended our Suffragette Tea Party

Fall History Club:

- 8 teens were actively involved and met once a week for an hour and a half to share a history spotlight and learn/practice an historic textile craft
Facilities

2020 was a big year for the WHC facilities, site, buildings, and grounds. While we were closed to the public a good portion of the year, we were able to get some much needed work done.

Renovated, Refinished, and Refreshed:

With grant and endowment support, we were able to do some upgrades to our site including floor replacement and restoration, bathroom upgrades, a new HVAC system, and more.

New Signage:

Through a grant from Travel Oregon, we replaced the outdated signs on our site with a fresh, new look. This included our tenant and directional signage inside the Warehouse, the old memorial sign on 12th St., and outside signage on the Library and Archives Building.

Re-striped the Parking Lot & New EV Chargers:

Fresh upgrades to the parking lot pull our new look together.

Rebuilt the Head Gate Assembly by the Turbine:

Our devoted and hard-working volunteer crew rebuilt the head gate assembly which acts like a dam controlling the flow of water to the turbine. Some of the rotted wooden boards and supports needed replacement and a pretty sizable leak had sprung up. It is now sound and ready for the next 40 years.

Built a Stage:

With the support of our newest tenant, Taproot, our volunteer crew built a stage in front of the historic homes to serve as a platform for performers, both new and historically significant, in future months.

New Interpretive Signage:

We installed eight new interpretive signs across our site for our outdoor exhibits.

Replaced Fire Sprinklers:

Updated and replaced worn out fire sprinklers in the Spinning Room.

New Café Tenant:

We welcomed our new café tenant – Taproot: The Old Mill Café – and are eager for them to open to the public once pandemic restrictions are lifted.

Research Services

We were able to help with 388 individual requests – furthering scholarship and understanding of our community history.

Research Requests Filled in 2020

Despite being closed to the public for much of the year, the Research Library and Archives continued to connect people with the WHC’s Collections remotely, serving 388 research requests throughout the year. Volunteers made this possible by contributing over half of the hours needed to operate!
Volunteers

Volunteers are vital to the day-to-day operations of the Willamette Heritage Center. Volunteers do everything from staffing the front desk, data entry, cataloguing artifacts, sewing costumes, demonstrating blacksmithing and weaving, teaching children how to card and spin wool, providing interpretive tours, and serving on the Board of Directors.

In 2020, while encouraging social distancing, we were honored to have over 20 committed volunteers supporting our programs from the comfort of their homes. These individuals worked on research projects, virtual events, indexing, woodworking, and more.

In the past year, volunteers donated over 4,477 hours of their time to support the Willamette Heritage Center. That is the equivalent of 2 full-time employees which is valued at $121,774.40. (source: independentsector.org)

Thank You Members!

As of January 1, 2021 we had 316 members, 21 of which belong to the Heritage Club (those giving $1,000 or more annually)!

Special Thanks to our Grantors and Special Events Sponsors!

- Alliance of Nonprofits for Insurance
- Atrio Health Plans, Inc.
- Corey Benson with Farmer’s Insurance
- City of Salem
- Evergreen Charitable Trust
- Grove Mueller Swank
- The H Group
- Highway Trailer Sales
- The Kinsman Foundation
- Kraft Custom Construction
- MAPS Credit Union
- The Oregon Community Foundation
- Oregon Cultural Trust
- Oregon Humanities
- Portland General Electric
- Ram Steele Co.
- Roth’s Fresh Markets
- SAIF Corporation
- Salem Electric
- Salem Fiberarts Guild
- Salem Leadership Foundation
- Becky & Jim Sterup
- Dorald Stoltz
- Travel Oregon
- United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley
- Valley Credit Union

Volunteers

Nearly 150 individuals gracially gave their time to support the WHC in 2020.

In 2020, while encouraging social distancing, we were honored to have over 20 committed volunteers supporting our programs from the comfort of their homes. These individuals worked on research projects, virtual events, indexing, woodworking, and more.

Finances

The WHC’s Event Sales Department and Fundraising Committee brought in nearly 88% of our income.

Net Income: (\$50,631*)

Revenue: \$558,064

Expenses: \$608,695

* The $138,000 Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) forgivable loan WHC received in May, 2020 is not reflected in the “net income” figure listed above.
2020 - 2023 Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Increase and diversify funding to meet budgetary needs.
- Strategy 1: Increase donors and sponsors
- Strategy 2: Elevate focus on grants
- Strategy 3: Increase rental capacity
- Strategy 4: Increase and maintain membership
- Strategy 5: Assess revenue generating programming

Goal 2: Deferred and ongoing maintenance is completed on Willamette Heritage Center site and structures to maintain a professional, welcome appearance and in accordance with preservation standards.
- Strategy 1: Formulate maintenance and preservation plan with 3, 5, and 10-year benchmarks.
- Strategy 2: Create maintenance and preservation funding plan.
- Strategy 3: Educate staff on preservation standards.
- Strategy 4: Reinvest sales revenue into event rental space.

Goal 3: Create internal and external brand consistency.
- Strategy 1: Update style guide.
- Strategy 2: Update name and logo on all materials.
- Strategy 3: Develop Willamette Heritage Center messaging to be utilized by Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers.
- Strategy 4: Ensure Willamette Heritage Center events are mission-driven.

2020 Events & Programs

The WHC hosted the following signature events and programs in 2020.

Educational Programs:
- Before Oregon
- Suffragette Tea Party
- Teen History Club

Exhibits:
- 10th Annual Heritage Invitational Exhibit: “Join the Club! An exhibit exploring the history of clubs and organizations in the Mid-Willamette Valley”

Signature Events:
- Virtual Magic at the Mill

Other Special Events:
- Drive-Thru Trick-or-Treat
- Zooming Back to History: An Online History Speaker Series