

MID-WILAMETTE VALLEY



Williamette Heritage Center
HERITAGE CENTER
1313 Mill St SE
Salem, OR 97301
503-585-7012
www.willametteheritage.org

Library and Archives:
By Appointments Only

Textile Learning Center:
4th Floor Mill Building
Tuesday – Friday
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

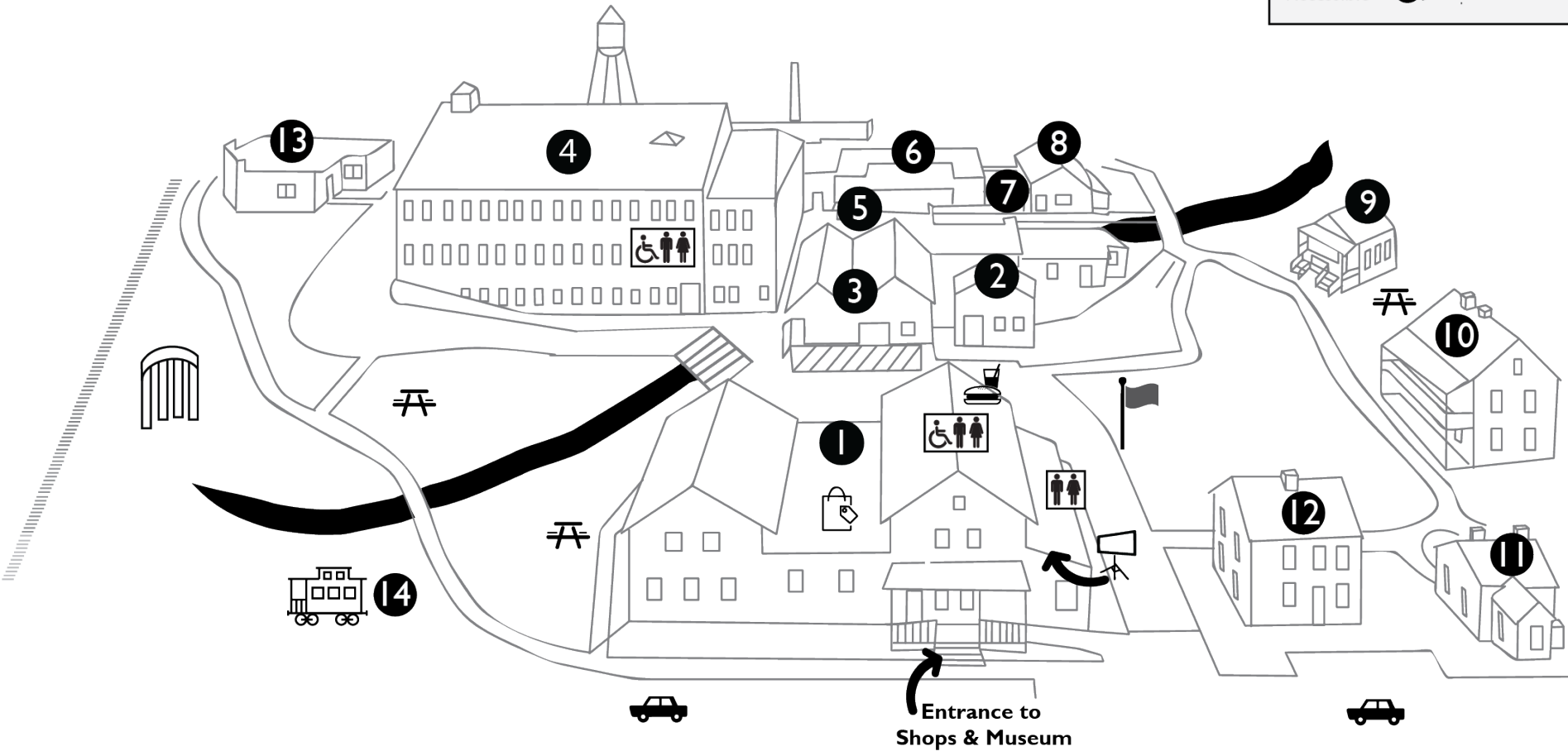
Museum Hours:
Tuesday – Saturday
10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Ask us about the benefits of membership!

In 2010, the Mission Mill Museum (est. 1964) and the Marion County Historical Society (est. 1950) merged. The new organization's mission is to preserve and interpret the history of the Mid-Willamette Valley, especially Marion County and the greater Salem area. The Williamette Heritage Center is a private, non-profit organization. It is not managed by city, county, state or federal agencies.

ABOUT US

VISITOR'S MAP



- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Warehouse Building | 8 Mentzer Machine Shop |
| 2 PGE Waterpower Exhibit | 9 Pleasant Grove Church |
| 3 Event Rental Space Only | 10 Jason Lee House |
| 4 Mill Building | 11 Boon House |
| 5 Scouring Room | 12 Parsonage |
| 6 Picker House | 13 Library & Archives |
| 7 Pump House | 14 Caboose 507 |

< 12th Street

Mill Street

PLEASE REMEMBER:

- No food or drinks are allowed in our historic structures.
- Please watch your step! Some areas have narrow, uneven and sometimes wet passageways.
- Please feel free to take photographs without a flash.

DO NOT LEAN INTO EXHIBIT SPACES, PROXIMITY ALARMS WILL SOUND

In this heritage invitational exhibit we have asked museums and community organizations throughout the Mid-Williamette Valley to share an artifact and its history to help us piece together the story of what it has meant to be healthy in the past and how that has changed over time.

Light therapy treatment at the Oregon State Tuberculosis Hospital, Salem.
WHC Collections 2005.015.0001.011
Given in Memory of Lloyd Allen Fast.



June 2 – October 7, 2023

Exhibit open now!

TO YOUR HEALTH

CHANGING EXHIBIT
2nd Floor Mill Building 

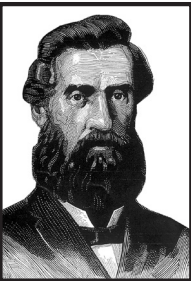
Restrooms		Cafe	
Picnic Tables		Shopping	
ADA Accessible		Parking	

TURN PAGE TO SEE TOUR ROUTES

TURN PAGE TO SEE TOUR ROUTES 

HOUSES TOUR

MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE (1834–1844)



In 1834, Jason Lee led a group of Methodists to form a mission to minister to the Native American people of Oregon on the banks of the Willamette River, 13 miles north of here. Persistent flooding led to relocating the mission south to a prairie called Chemeketa. Here the missionaries constructed a grist and sawmill, two residences and a school, which would become the nucleus for the city of Salem.

1 / The Lee House (1841)

Four missionary families originally occupied this house living independently in four apartments, including the Lees, Judsons, Parrishes and Raymonds.

The house served as headquarters for Methodist Mission operations in the Oregon Country, which included satellite stations as far north as Tacoma and east as The Dalles. It also hosted meetings of the early provisional government and served as an early post office. When the mission closed it became the private residence of Judge Ruben P. Boise. In danger of being torn down, the Lee House was stripped of its Victorian additions and moved to a temporary site awaiting a permanent home. It was moved here in 1965. In this house you can learn about:

- History of the Methodist Mission to Oregon
- Missionaries and their families
- Early Education in the Oregon Country

 Wheel Chair Accessible – First Floor Only



2 / The Boon House (1847)

This is the oldest single family house still standing in Salem. John Boon and his family came over the Oregon Trail in 1845. After a brief stint homesteading, the family relocated to Salem where John D. Boon became very involved in business and politics. He co-founded the first woolen mill in Oregon and served as the last Territorial and the first State Treasurer in Oregon. The Boon House was moved from north of downtown to its current location in 1972. In this house you can learn about:

- The Oregon Trail
- The Boon Family
- Early Industry and Agriculture

 Note: There is ADA access to this house via ramp behind the house.



Pleasant Grove Presbyterian Church (1858)

This little church is also known as the “Condit Church” for one of its founding families on whose land the church was constructed. Rev. Philip Condit and his family came to Oregon from Ohio in 1854. The church was built as a true community effort with community members pledging \$1378.25 in cash, glass, nails, lumber, paint, bibles, shingles, lead and labor to complete the structure, which was finished by April 1858. Sadly, Rev. Condit didn’t live to see its completion. The church represents a meetinghouse-style associated with early country churches. It is one of the oldest surviving Presbyterian churches in the Pacific Northwest. The building was moved from outside Aumsville to the museum’s grounds in 1984. Currently, the museum rents out the church for weddings and other special events. Inquire at the front desk for more information.

Note: Not Wheel Chair Accessible. View through left side door.

3 / The Parsonage (1841)


The Parsonage was the 2nd frame structure built with lumber from the Mission’s sawmill. Originally designed as a duplex, it housed those missionaries who oversaw the Indian Manual Training School. Among its residents were Rev. Gustavus Hines, Hamilton Campell and their families. This was the only building retained by the Methodist Church when the mission closed and it served as the parsonage for their minister and as a base for circuit riders, or itinerant preachers in the valley. The Parsonage was originally located where the mill’s water tower now stands. Today the exhibits take a look back at early valley residents with galleries focusing on:

- The Kalapuya
- Women and Children
- Families
- Historic Preservation

Note: Not Wheel Chair Accessible




MILL TOUR

A / MENTZER MACHINE SHOP Named for the Mill’s faithful and popular millwright, Wayne Mentzer (millwright for 60 years from 1924-1984), the machine shop is where his valuable work took place. The moving machinery and tools on display are original to the Mill and were used for everything from making machine parts to repairing structures. 


B / TURBINE AND CROWN GEARS


This turbine operated the mill machinery and today feeds a generator producing electricity. As you walk down the stairs and through the shelter you pass the crown gears which transfer motion from the vertical turbine to the horizontal shaft that powered all of the machinery in the main mill building.

C / PICKER HOUSE One of the Mill’s dirtiest jobs took place this dark, damp, cold structure. Here virgin wool was picked clean of burrs, grass, feces and pests. Other machines picked wool products to recycle their fibers to be made into less expensive “shoddy” fabric. 

D / DYE HOUSE During the Mill’s operation (1889-1962), dyeing was done in a series of interconnected sheds and buildings. Today’s Dye House is a reconstruction using an original wall on the south side. **This building is currently rented for special events and classes ONLY.**

E / MILL BUILDING This brick building was designed by Salem Architect Walter David Pugh in 1896 after a fire destroyed the original 1889 wooden structure. In 2006, major rehabilitation of the building’s exterior was completed with its designation by the National Park Service as an American Treasure. Enjoy the interpretation in the 1st floor lobby and then move up to the 2nd floor to continue on the mill tour.

F / SCOURING ROOM The Scouring room was built above the water and housed machines that cleaned dirty wool. 

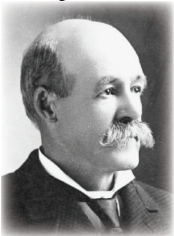
 **RESTROOMS** Restrooms are located on the 2nd floor.

1 / CARDING The wire-covered carding rolls comb and untangle wool fibers. The web of wool formed is separated at the end of the process into distinct strips called roving that is ready to be spun.

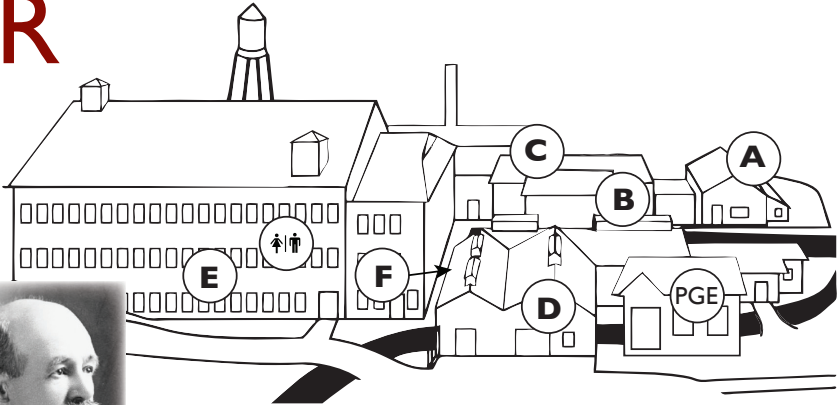
2 / SPINNING The spinning mule twists the roving into yarn as it moves in one direction, and winds onto bobbins on the return. The spinning frame, a later invention, performs the same process in a more compact and efficient manner.

3 / DRESSING This process prepares the lengthwise, or warp, threads to be placed in the loom. The threads are wound from individual bobbins onto spools, and then onto the warping reel. From there, they are wound onto the warp beam, threaded through eyes in the wire heddles, and then through the reed. Finally, the warp beam, the warp, the heddles in their harnesses, and the reed are all placed in the loom for weaving.

4 / WEAVING: Weaving is the crossing of warp threads running lengthwise in the loom and weft threads, or filling threads, inserted crosswise.



Thomas Lister Kay,
Founder of the Thomas
Kay Woolen Mill in 1889



The weft thread is added by a shuttle carrying a bobbin of yarn. Our weavers’ guild is located on the 4th floor of the mill building and is open to the public on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays if you’d like to see weaving in action.

5 / PERCHING After weaving, the fabric is hung on a “perch” for inspection. Imperfections are marked, then the cloth is cut and dropped through a trap door. It is then weighed, measured, ticketed and passed on to the burlers and menders in the finishing room below.

6A / BURLING The burler finds and removes knots, bunches and loose ends, then marks any “runs” to which menders add missing threads.

6B / MENDING Menders re-weave yarn into the fabric by hand wherever threads are missing.

MILL BUILDING 1ST & 2ND FLOOR

