

Herrmann's life impacted by growing up on Willamette

by Jim Titus
Copyeditor

The Willamette River played an important part in the development of the environmental awareness of Jerry Herrmann, director of the John Inskeep Environmental Learning Center.

Herrmann grew up in Lonesome Bottoms, on the banks of the Willamette River near West Linn, and feels that this is where the first seeds of his involvement with the environment were planted.

"We used to play in the river and fish all the time. We used to 'harvest' lumber from the river as it floated by. I guess I got my background in salvage from the river," Herrmann quipped. "The Environmentrekking series that we evolved here (at the ELC) probably came about because of my interest in the river."

All of the structures at the ELC are made from recycled materials when possible, and some of them are linked to Herrmann's river past.

"Just about anything you could want to build something with came down the river at one time or another. All of the bridges (here at the ELC) are built out of cedar we got from the river that I had stored at my parents' place," remarked Herrmann.

"I guess the big thing about growing up on the river for me was that it really put me in touch with nature," Herrmann stated. "You really get attuned to the

cycle of the river."

But Herrmann says that he never knew as much about the Willamette as he does now, after working at the ELC for 15 years.

"The river trips that we do have really made me aware of the environment. I know what to look for now--things like the history of the river and its cultural aspects," explained Herrmann. "I know the majority of the Willamette intimately."

Herrmann always had an interest in plants, spending a lot of time working in nurseries during high school. He even started his own neighborhood nursery with rejected plants.

Herrmann carried his love of plants into the Navy, comparing himself to the captain from "Mr. Roberts." As a weapons yeoman, he soon "vegetated" his section of the ship he served on.

"I couldn't stand not having any plants. Whenever we were in port I would buy plants. Pretty soon my office (aboard ship) was full of draping ivies," Herrmann said.

Herrmann fell in love with oriental landscape design while in Japan. This love has also had an impact on the ELC, the design of which Herrmann describes as a "Chinese hill garden."

After his discharge from the Navy in 1970 Herrmann attended Clackamas Community College, majoring in landscape architecture. He credits a lot of the design

of the ELC to the art classes he took at Clackamas.

"I would say that the most profound aspects of the center were influenced by the things that I learned in art class," remarked Herrmann.

While a student at Clackamas, Herrmann participated in the planning of how the ELC would look, creating a clay sculpture of the landscape design as an art project.

Herrmann attended the University of Washington but completed his degree at Portland State University.

He began volunteering time to the ELC project, feeling the need for someone to oversee the center's construction. At one point he volunteered 10 months out of a year to the completion of the ELC, which was built on a former Smucker's plant waste site.

Herrmann became the director of the ELC in 1977, when the center became a non-profit organization in order to conduct its own fundraising. The ELC has a 12-member board of directors and a regular membership of over 400.

Throughout the last 15 years has seen the transformation of the ELC from an industrial waste site to a thriving microcosm of the local environment, offering a variety of educational programs. Herrmann says the center plans to continue these programs in the future and expand the on-site exhibits, to include more plant-



photo by Tara Powers

Jerry Herrmann states that the river trips that are done through the ELC have made him more aware of the environment.

ing. Personally, Herrmann feels that a political career may be in his future.

"I'm a little discouraged with the level of legislative ability I see in Salem. I want to target some of our effort toward seminars and workshops to teach leg-

islators about subjects that they should know about," Herrmann explained. "I feel it may be time to look at some legislative office. I think I have a lot of abilities I could bring to the legislature. They need some people with a broad-based environmental background and they don't have that many right now."

'Crusade' catches, cajoles moviegoer into madcap merriment

Piller's Picks
Rick Piller

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade starts at run and keeps building speed.

Harrison Ford returns as the archeologist/adventurer in the action packed finale of the Indiana Jones trilogy. Ford started work on the film two years back by going to the gym with "Body by Jake," and he needed it! All of his scenes are very physical and exciting. Ford describes Indy this way: "Indiana Jones is an adventurer, but he has human frailties, fears, money problems. He teaches, but I wouldn't call him an intellectual. He does brave things, but I wouldn't call him a hero. He's just there with a bullwhip to keep the world at bay."

Dr. Henry Jones, Sr. is played by Academy award winner Sean Connery (of course Indy could only come from the loins of James Bond). Connery began his acting career in 1950 when he was competing for Mr. Universe in London.

Speilberg directed this final episode of Indy and didn't pull

any punches in the action department, starting off with a scene of Henry Jr. as a young boy that is meant to explain why he hates snakes. From then on you will have no time to rest or even breathe as you join the rest of the audience in an endless collection of action and humor. Connery said that one of the reasons the film is pleasing is "the return to an older age; not an age of hardware and spacecraft, but cars and aeroplanes and



trains and horses."

Filled to the brim with astounding stunts Indiana Jones overfills even the most jaded audiences with extraordinary feats of skill. Harrison Ford performed

most of his own stunts, but those that may have placed him in jeopardy were delegated to professional stunt men. Vic Armstrong, the stunt co-ordinator and Harrison Ford's double, says that "Harrison's participation in the stunts is what makes them so exciting and enjoyable to moviegoers."

For the Jones boys their last quest is the only one that could have topped finding the Ark of

the Covenant. Those two globe trotting archeology wonder boys go from Venice, Italy, where you learn that there is a lot more to libraries than you may know, to Germany, where you learn that these two dirt sifters also like to get autographs. Then we all get to a good look at the Hagia Sophia, just before we find the trail to lead us to our "Chalice of Gold."

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