

As Multnomah Centennial celebration approaches, historical society looks for new home

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

When Patti Waitman tripped over the awkward stairs, she knew something had to change. As the president of the Multnomah Historical Association prepares for the neighborhood’s 100-year birthday party (August 8 – 17), she hoped the publicity would bring her organization a badly needed new home along with new members and a better understanding of the association’s function.

“We’re in a lower level of a building that isn’t accessible,” Waitman said. She described the current space as “more like storage” and unsuitable as a place for the public to visit. The association hopes to find a location large enough to display their growing collection and provide researchers a place to work. In addition, they welcome small display spaces in area shops.

The Multnomah Historical Association started when Multnomah School closed in 1978. They wanted to preserve the school’s history and this quickly expanded to include Multnomah Village and then Southwest Portland. “We’re interested in all Southwest Portland neighborhoods,” Waitman emphasized. She and the association board are contemplating a name change to reflect their organization’s broader scope.

Waitman grew up in Maplewood. “I’m the fourth generation of women born in the same Oregon town,” she says. In addition to neighborhood activities, Waitman works full-time as a Providence Health Systems nurse/social

worker. “A lot of people have lived here a long time. Others have moved here and really embrace it.” She said she hoped upcoming centennial celebrations bring everyone together.

Events begin August 8 at 6 p.m. with the Multnomah Arts Center (7688 S.W. Capitol Hwy) exhibit of historic photographs and memorabilia. Wine, cheese, and staff in period costumes are included. A plaque commemorating Multnomah viaduct history will be presented at the bridge the next day.

“Multnomah Boulevard was originally a train track, and in 1927 they built the bridge over it for safety reasons,” Waitman says. “Capitol Highway was the main westside route to the state capital in Salem.” After the ceremony, the West Hills Christian Church (3824 S.W. Troy St.) will host a Multnomah birthday party complete with cake and balloons.

On Friday, August 15, the Multnomah School all-class reunion will include digging up a time capsule left by the final 1978 class. Historic walking tours will take place throughout the week, and Multnomah Village’s annual Multnomah Days parade and festival happens Saturday, August 16.

This year Waitman anticipates a special grand celebration complete with Royal Rosarians. “The parade usually starts at the post office and ends past the school,” Waitman says. “It’s fun and small-town with street vendors all along the way.” A sing-a-long ice-cream social will follow at Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church (515 S.W. Maplecrest Dr.).

Additional events are being planned,

and Waitman urged people to check the Historical Association’s website for the schedule and updates. Meanwhile she and other volunteers are working hard at long-term projects.

“I’m interested in finding the oldest houses in the various southwest neighborhoods,” Waitman says. The Historical Association is collecting information about any Southwest house built before 1946. She said she hoped the July 20 Hillsdale library class “Researching Your House’s History” will jumpstart the effort.

The group also plans to catalog Southwest Portland markers. Downloadable forms for both surveys are on their website. The projects are ongoing but Waitman hopes to display something by the centennial.

“We’ve enlisted every neighborhood, and I’ve sent press releases every month,” Waitman says about efforts to get out the word on Multnomah’s birthday bash. “We’ve had a really good response.”

Meanwhile, Waitman said she’s looking forward to wearing her costumes for the Multnomah Center’s August 8 opening exhibit. “I have Revolutionary War, Civil War -- whatever suits my fancy. Did you know Capitol Highway traffic stops if you cross in a hoop skirt?”

Multnomah Historical Association, visit their website www.multnomah-historical.com. Or contact Patti Wait-

man pattitwirler@comcast.net, (503) 244-9238.

Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Blvd, (503) 988-5388. “Researching Your House’s History” will be presented July 20, 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. www.multcolib.org/agcy/hls.html. Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy, (503) 823-ARTS (2787) www.multnomahartscenter.org.



Patti Waitman and granddaughters Amy and Megan at the Vernonia Parade. (Photo courtesy of Patti Waitman)

Ash Creek Woods



Better than new! Impeccable inside and out. 4 BR 2.5 BA. Gourmet kitchen w/ attached family room & eating area that opens to huge private deck designed for the best in outdoor living. Large master with remodeled bath. \$725,000

Johns Landing



4 BR 2 BA remodeled home w/ views of the city, mountains & river. Open floor plan w/ hardwood floors & walls of windows. Maple, granite & SS in kitchen. Level backyard & 1,100 sq ft deck. Just minutes to downtown and OHSU. \$598,500

Hillsdale



First time on the market! Custom built in 1956. 4 bedrooms & 2 fireplaces, family room & workshop. Vaulted ceilings and hardwoods. Beautiful lot with SW views. Great location in Hillsdale. \$435,000

Stephenson



Pearched way up high on a .63 acre mostly flat lot. This mid century has a nice view, privacy and character. 3 bedrooms, hardwoods, sunroom & double garage \$386,000.

Bridlemile



Quality one level home w/ 3 BR 2 BA. Gardeners paradise w/ beautiful grounds. Covered private patio. Hardwood floors, family room off kitchen w/ brick fireplace, large living room w/ built-ins and fireplace. \$424,500

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Quality Tri-Level home in Wilson Park. Hardwood floors and 2 brick fireplaces. Large bedrooms and closets. Plenty of storage space. Nice backyard with patio. \$395,000

Multnomah Village



View of the coast range! 3 bedroom, 2 bath home. 1,652 square feet. Light & bright living room w/ woodstove & slider to large deck. 2 kitchens & Oak floors. View & private deck from master bedroom. Driveway & garage below. \$375,000

Multnomah Village



Cozy Bungalow w/view located in Multnomah Village. Living room with hardwood floors and fireplace. Master bedroom upstairs with full bath. Unfinished basement. Great yard with deck. \$375,000

OHSU



Mountain and City views! Perched above OHSU Med School. This 2 BR 3 BA charmer is ready to go! Hardwood floors & newer wood windows. French doors open to large deck with view. Very peaceful and quiet. \$359,000

Garden Home



Your own oasis! 3 BR 2 BA. Beautiful large backyard. Impeccable home w/ gleaming hardwood floors & fireplace in living room. Master suite w/ loft. Remodeled baths & new windows. \$357,000

Vermont Hills



Quiet secluded setting on cul-de-sac. 3 BR 2 BA. Nice deck overlooking private wooded area. Beautifully maintained home with new paint inside and out. New carpet & vaulted ceilings. Great location. \$339,000

Multnomah Village



2 BR, 1.5 BA home w/ studio guest house. Fireplace, leaded glass windows, oak floors, built-ins, bonus room & single garage. Mahogany deck in large fenced backyard w/ separate patio areas. Just blocks to Multnomah Village. \$337,500

Vermont Hills



Same owner for the last 27 years. Solid Mid Century home, blocks to Gabriel Park. Dry full concrete basement with tall ceilings. Newer vinyl windows. Neil Kelly remodeled bathroom. \$319,000

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