

OREGON STATE HOSPITAL

*Famed as the setting for
"One Flew Over the
Cuckoo's Nest," Oregon
State Hospital's J
Building succumbs to
the wrecking ball*

This bird has flown

Photos and story by Amanda Waldroupe

One day before the Hospital's notorious J Building gets gutted out of memory, the Mental Health Association of Portland (and Street Roots) gets inside for the ward's last photo op.

Growing up in Oregon, I heard of Ken Kesey — the LSD experiments, the Magical Mystery Tour Bus and, of course, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," which I read during my junior year of high school.

I had largely forgotten that "Cuckoo's Nest" was set at Salem's infamous Oregon State Hospital, the institution for Oregon's most severely mentally ill, until the hospital once again was mentioned in the media, but more scathingly so in *The Oregonian's* 2006 coverage of the hospital's conditions and treatment of its patients.

It was as if Oregon's most vulnerable citizens were acting out the lives of the characters in "Cuckoo's Nest," 40 years later.

On Dec. 17, I got an email from Jason Renaud of the Mental Health Association of Portland. They were going on a tour of the hospital. Would I like to come?



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