

Slide 1: Hi, I'm your Historic Preservation Program Manager- Kimberli Fitzgerald

Through this program, I'll be giving you regular updates about our historic preservation program and projects we are working on as well as a few fun tidbits of history.

Slide 2: Part of our program will always be a "This Day in History" piece. Today I am featuring an article that appeared 100 years ago in the Statesman Journal about a Hydroplane Landing on the Willamette River. I was not able to find a photo confirming that it actually happened. Maybe you can find one? I've got a stock photo from this era.

Slide 3: Now I'm switching hats – and will be giving you an update about what's new in Salem's archaeology field.

Slide 4: This week we will be starting work on Salem's Jason Lee Mission House site – located on Broadway.

Slide 5: In November 2019, the proposal for this new mixed use building was approved at Salem's Planning Commission. The property owner reached out to me to ask if this property had any archaeological significance and whether any archaeological compliance would be required as part of the redevelopment.

Slide 6: At first glance, this site doesn't look that interesting. It's just a parking lot with a vacant undeveloped grassy area.

Slide 7: However, I was quite excited to learn that this was the site of Jason Lee's Mission House. Jason Lee was a Methodist Missionary who came to what is now Oregon in 1834. He first settled about 10 miles north of Salem at Mission Bottom. He moved to this site in 1841 and built a house here, because the conditions were better.

Jason Lee was significant for his efforts to ensure the territory now known as Oregon became part of the United States.

Jason Lee lived in the House for just a few years- he died in 1845 back east; but was reburied in Salem in 1906.

Slide 8: The House served many other significant purposes during its lifetime, including the Salem's post office; Territorial Treasury, where Willamette University was formed; purchased by Judge Reuben P. Boise it became a center of his work, sometimes serving as a courtroom; later it became an apartment house.

Slide 9: The house was moved in 1963 by preservationists, as the site was bought to be redeveloped. It was moved to its current location at the Willamette Heritage Center.

Slide 10: So the next question we need to answer for a project like this is whether there will be any ground disturbance that may have the potential to adversely impact any archaeological resources?

Slide 11: This question is important because there are a number of laws protecting archaeological resources. There were federal laws established beginning in 1906 with the Antiquities act, ending with NAGPRA in 1990. There are also a number of state and local laws protecting archaeological resources.

Slide 12: What does this mean for the project? Well it means that the property can't be redeveloped until an archaeological permit is obtained and the SHPO and Tribes consulted about how best to recover and record the archaeological artifacts and features that may still be on the site.

Slide 13: In this particular case, due to the significance of the site, we have a public private partnership where we are working together to try to learn as much as we can about the site before it is redeveloped.

Slide 14: Ross Smith, of Stantec Consulting is the archaeologist who is volunteering his time to be the lead investigator along with Jamie French of the SHPO office. Ross applied for the archaeological permit which includes a description of the historic significance of the site as well as the proposed method for archaeological testing, excavation. Our goal again, is the recovery of as many artifacts as possible to help us learn as much as we can about this site before it is redeveloped.

Slide 15: They completed some archaeological work at Mission Bottom in 1979/1980 and 7500 artifacts were recovered from the period dating from 1834-1841. Their work can help us better understand what we might expect to find when we do our project.

Slide 16: We originally envisioned that this project would be a public archaeology project similar to our Police Facility public archaeology project.

BUT we are currently trying to stay safe in this COVID19 pandemic; so we are scaling our project back from our original idea – we will have only 1-2 units open at a time and limit the total number of people at any time to 15 people on site, we will maintain social distancing on the site and have a hand washing station.

We are reaching out to just those folks who have training and experience in archaeology. But we will be updating you through regular video updates.

Slide 17: Subscribe to our YouTube Channel to get your regular Taste of Salem History Thanks for your interest and support of Salem's Historic Preservation Program!