

Albany Regional Museum's The Albany Old Times

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The Albany Regional Museum

is located in the basement of the Downtown Public Library and has existed since 1981. It was established by a group of people concerned about the loss of historical objects pertaining to the history of Albany. They realized that a museum needed to be organized to preserve and display what materials did remain from Albany's rich past.

The Historic Advisory and Museum Commission (HAMC), appointed by the Albany City Council, was also interested in the establishment of a local museum. A Museum Steering Committee chaired by Gerald Brenneman was formed to "organize, establish, and maintain a museum". Negotiations with the City of Albany Library Board resulted in the museum's location in the basement of the historic Downtown Carnegie Library. The state of Oregon granted non-profit status to the ARM in early 1981. On July 1, 1981, the ARM Board took possession of the basement space.

Since that time, volunteers have worked tirelessly to first renovate the museum facility and then to achieve the stated goal of the museum which is to "acquire, document, preserve, and interpret materials that illustrate the history and development of Albany, Oregon".

For the first year, the Museum opened periodically for special events such as the Historic Home Tour and the Albany Spring Arts Festival. In the summer of 1982, the museum presented a display of artifacts from the Burkhart estate, the first large donation the museum had acquired. Since

then, the museum has displayed exhibits on antique textiles, historic architecture, the Calapooia Indians and the 1920's, to name a few. The present display is "Albany In The 1940's" which features an exhibit on Camp Adair, the Rialto Theater, and J.C. Penny's as they were in the 1940's.

The museum is open Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 11:00 - 4:00. It is staffed by volunteers who give their time to design and put up exhibits, act as museum guides, and process museum donations. In 1985, the position of Director of Historical Resources was created by the local tourism board. Although the director has many responsibilities, because her office is located in the museum facility, she is able to oversee volunteers and interns.

Currently, the funding for the museum comes from contributions from the public. The city provides the building and pays utilities. The museum itself is manned by volunteers. The ultimate goal of the Albany Regional Museum is to become a first-class museum that is professionally staffed, properly funded and operated, and open daily to the public.

Museum Receives Award

The Albany Regional Museum's 1920's exhibit was the proud recipient of the Albany Historic Preservation and Restoration Award for the single most outstanding event in the year of 1987.

Board Members of the Albany Regional Museum 1988

Capi Alexander
Gerald Brenneman
Catherine Fobar
Lynn Powers
Douglas Rieden
Rosemary Schoblom
Kristen Shuttpez
Marianne Straumfjord
Russ Sprague
Jerry Wilken

Albany in the 1940's

The Albany Regional Museum's new exhibit titled ALBANY IN THE 1940'S, THE HOME FRONT, brings back that united and dedicated time in American history. Walk-in shops are set up with items from the 40's featuring the American Red Cross, Linn County Chapter, J.C. Penney's, The Rialto Theater (the current attraction being "To Have and Have Not" with Humphrey Bogart), the Cravemore Soda Shop (where all the teenagers hung out), and a living room scene. There is also a timeline outlining the events that happened nationally and locally through the 40's, a scrap drive, music of the era, magazines (to really look through), photographs of Albany at that time (taken by local historian, Bob Potts), and much more. In addition, one room is dedicated to Camp Adair.

The museum is located at 302 Ferry Street, in the basement of the downtown library, and is free and open on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 11 AM to 4 PM. For more information call 967-6540.

NEW EXHIBIT FEATURES CAMP ADAIR

Camp Adair, a World War II Army cantonment, was located northwest of Albany on 50,000 acres in Benton and Polk Counties. The site was chosen by the United States War Department as a training site for Triangular Divisions from the Ninth Army Corps -- 30,000 men each, consisting of infantry, artillery and engineering units with the necessary support personnel.

In order to construct this cantonment, which became the second largest city in Oregon, families were uprooted, cemeteries relocated, railroad tracks rerouted, and the small community of Wells was erased.

The camp was named in honor of Henry Rodney Adair, a West Point graduate and descendant of Oregon pioneers, who was the first Oregonian killed during the 1916 Mexican border clashes.

The area east of Highway 99W, on the valley floor, was used for the base camp while the hilly area west of the highway was used for training maneuvers. To simulate actual conditions, full-scale models of European towns were constructed in this area.

Four infantry divisions were trained at Camp Adair for overseas duty: the 91st "Powder River" Infantry Division, the 96th "Deadeye" Infantry Division, the 104th "Timberwolf" Infantry Division, and the 70th "Trailblazer" Infantry Division. Three of the divisions the 96th, 104th, and 70th were activated at Camp Adair while the 91st was activated at Camp White near Medford, Oregon.

Remembrances of Camp Adair include poison oak, snakes, summer's dust, and intense training. Perhaps the most lasting memory was Oregon's rain. After sloshing through the countryside, marching, pushing and pulling vehicles through the mud, trying to keep equipment from rusting, fording swollen

streams, it is no wonder many called the camp--Swamp Adair.

During World War II, the armed forces were segregated. Black soldiers were assigned to camp Adair, but were not part of any of the divisions that trained at the camp. Very little information about the black soldiers' role has been discovered, although it is thought they were assigned to the Quartermaster Corps.

The U.S. Army turned the Camp Adair hospital over to the U.S. Navy. Casualties from the Pacific Theater of war were brought to Camp Adair for treatment and recuperation. On March 1, 1946, it was reported that the wounded were arriving by train, and the hospital had been enlarged to take care of 3,600.

Shortly after the last division left, part of Camp Adair served as a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp for Italians, then Germans. It appears POWs were at Camp Adair from August 1944 through April 1946. although former civilian personnel have memories of both German and Italian POWs at the camp, their presence was not common knowledge in nearby communities.

In June, 1988 the Albany Regional Museum installed an exhibit of Albany in the 1940's with a special room on Camp Adair. This exhibit is still in the growing stage and will be updated and changed. The museum volunteers continue to gather documentary materials and objects about the cantonment and its impact on Albany.

If you have recollections, papers, photographs, or other objects you would be willing to donate to the Museum for the Camp Adair room, please let us know.

For further information or donations, contact:

Roz Keeney, Historical Resource

Director - 967-6540, or

Cathy Fobar, Museum Board Chairperson - 926-0676.



Photo courtesy of Bob Potts

**ARM WILL HONOR
AMERICAN WAR VETERANS
THE WEEKEND OF
NOVEMBER 11th AND 12th BY
HAVING A SPECIAL OPEN
HOUSE.**

**JOIN US FOR A SALUTE TO
OUR HEROS.**

A Very Special Thanks

The Museum Board extends a special "Thank You" to Bill Pirie who volunteered to paint the signs for the 1940's exhibit. His signs are outstanding and his effort to complete the signs was above and beyond our expectations.

"The 1940's Scrap Drives"

"Slap the Jap with the Scrap" and Bing Crosby's "Junk Will Win the War" were theme songs for the home front efforts to aid the war.

After Pearl Harbor, Americans went on the biggest scavenger hunt in its history. Patriotic citizens ransacked their attics and cleared their basements for bits and pieces of junk that could be recycled into ammunition or war supplies.

Every community had scrap drives of some sort throughout the war. Albany's activities, beginning in late 1941, were chronicled with stories and pictures in the local newspaper. The July 2, 1942 issue heralds a 216 ton collection of scrap rubber. An incentive program of one free movie ticket for every six pounds of scrap rubber was announced in that edition. By September of that year, increased needs demanded another intense drive by all Linn County residents. One of the first donations was to be the cannon from the courthouse lawn!

Very little escaped the collectors' nets, as Americans discarded old boots and shoes, rusty baby carriages, dented pots and pans, empty toothpaste tubes, used tin cans, damaged car bumpers, garden hoses, swim caps, horseshoes, and every sort of paper imaginable. Families saved bacon grease for ammunition manufacturing. Women turned in silk and nylon stockings (laundered first please!) to make powder bags.

Children were some of the most zealous collectors, who among other things, painstakingly peeled tin foil bits off cigarette and chewing gum wrappers, rolled them into a ball, and then sold the hefty glob for \$.50. Junior Commando groups (imitating the regimen and hierarchy of older brothers and sisters in the armed services) organized and solicited door to door on weekly crusades.

Zealous scavengers attempted to out-promote one another. In



Photo courtesy of Bob Potts

New York City, a car load of chorus girls from a Broadway play drove up to a collector's depot and wriggled out of their girdles en masse. In Wyoming, a less sensational group took apart a 20-ton steam engine and then built the several miles of new road necessary to get it to the collection center.

Within weeks of Roosevelt's call for junk, our nation had shared 5 million tons of scrap rubber. The entire promotion was so successful that initially the government could not handle the load and scrap accumulated for months before being used. Later, "junk" supplied much of the steel in the U.S. and 50% of the tin and paper needed in the war effort, although much of what was amassed was unsuitable for use.

The home front workers were inspired with posters emphasizing the need and uses for scrap.

1 old radiator=17(.30 calibre)rifles
1 old lawn mower=6(3")shells
1 old shovel=4 hand grenades
1 old tire=12 gas masks

Through it all, a sense of purpose and community permeated the scavenging. The spirit of the times was perhaps best summed up by a sign on an old jalopy that wound up at a government collection depot proclaiming: "Praise the Lord and I'll Soon be Ammunition"

1940's Banquet at Lilla's

The Albany Regional Museum hosted a 1940's Banquet at the historic Lilla's Bed and Breakfast in downtown Albany on Friday, May 6th, 1988. The fundraiser dinner was held as a kick-off event for the museum's 1940's exhibit. Some of the museum's members and their guests dressed in 1940's outfits including one gentleman who wore his 1940 Naval uniform for which he received many compliments. The highlight of the dinner was a style show of 1940's dresses modeled by Raylene Roberts and Madel Jorgenson. The dresses and accessories were loaned by Della Enge, owner of "I Remember Antiques" store, 240 4th Avenue SE, Albany.

A Special Thanks...

The Albany Regional Museum wishes to thank all the individuals who donated items to the museum in 1988. Cathy Fobar, current president of the museum says, "Last year the community was more generous than ever. We really appreciate the people who entrusted the museum with their historic items. The Indian artifacts, local photographs, vintage clothing, research material, and Albany memorabilia will help to tell the story of Albany to future generations."

Carolyn Pepper Adams
Albany Public Library
Debbie Andrews
Gerald Brenneman
Carolyn Brown
Katherine Buike
Lural Burggraf
Esther Burkhardt Card
Milton & Patricia Cardwell
Rose Cyrus
Ruth Dalen
Vera Egar
Nancy Fairchild
Cathy Fobar
Gordon Graber
Lillian Green
Mildred Hawkins
Edward Hereth
Sally Johnson
Cindy Kastl
Rosalind Keenoy
Goardina Krauss
Roger Koenig
Charles Kuttner

Fern Laidlaw
Robert Letcher
Linn County Chapter Red Cross
Robert McClain
Susan Minson
Susan Osburn
Dorwin Packard
Robert Potts
Mrs. H. Pontius
Wes Price
Douglas Rieden
David Rousey
Rosemary Shibley
Rosemary Schobлом
G.B. Sieden
Emma Snelling
June Sorseth
Russ Sprague
Gail Stuart
Rod & Marty Tripp
H.H. Watson
Gary Werkentine
Betty Westby
Russell & Robert Williamson
Shirley Wilson
Elaine Weinberg

CHRISTMAS CHEER

The Albany Regional Museum will be decorated and open for the Holidays. Guests will be served hot mulled cider and may listen to Christmas carols from the 1940's. A Christmas tree with old-fashioned decorations and toys from the 40's will be a special addition to the exhibit.

The museum will also be open for the Old-Fashioned Christmas Parlor Tour on Sunday, December 11 from 2 to 7.



Photo courtesy of Bob Potts

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Non-Profit
Organization
Permit #148