

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

September 20, 2023

Agenda Item:	7a	Information
Topic:	Heritage Division Update	
Presented by:	Christine Curran, Deputy Director, Heritage Programs	

Jim Pepper House added to the National Register of Historic Places

The Jim Pepper House at 10809 NE Fremont Street, in the Parkrose Neighborhood of Portland, is one of Oregon's most recent additions to the National Register of Historic Places. Community members celebrated the listing at an event attended by Congressman Earl Blumenauer.

Jim Pepper is significant for his role in performing and promoting world music and modern jazz-rock, primarily through his fusion of jazz concepts and instrumentation with those of his own Native American (Kaw and Muscogee Creek) heritage. His career took him from this house to local venues like the Cotton Club on Vancouver Avenue and Ray's Helm on Broadway to far-off clubs and audiences worldwide. During his career, he defied stereotypes of indigenous people, broadened the definition of fusion jazz, and brought modern and traditional indigenous culture to national and worldwide audiences, challenging preconceived notions about jazz music and what it means to be a Native American artist. As a boy, Pepper learned many traditional songs that would later influence his jazz compositions. He returned to this home regularly as an adult, hosting friends and fellow artists for gatherings and jam sessions and composing several important pieces with his father, Gilbert Pepper, in the house's living room. The house was the birthplace and center of Jim Pepper's influential career. His musical influence is perhaps best exemplified by his 1971 album, "Pepper's Pow Wow," noted for defying categorization in any of the music's jazz, folk, traditional, or rock genres. His local, national, and worldwide touring brought modern and traditional Native American culture to audiences around the globe until his untimely death from cancer in 1992 at just 51.



Jazz Saxophonist, Composer, and Singer, Jim Pepper, June 18, 1941 – February 10, 1992

The event featured speakers Congressman Blumenauer, Portland City Commissioner Carmen Rubio, Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability Director Donnie Oliveira, property owner and Director of the Jim Pepper Native Arts Council Sean Cruz, and Jason Allen from the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. A common thread among the speakers was the need to expand the National Register of Historic Places to recognize the important contributions of all

Oregonians. The Jim Pepper House now joins other significant recently-listed properties such as Dean's Beauty Salon and Barber Shop, Darcelle XV, and others in recognizing that the fabric of our history is woven by people from all backgrounds, ethnicities, communities, and origins.

Agency hosts the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officer's July Meeting

The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DHAP) cohosted the July National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) meeting at historic Fort Vancouver in Washington State.

Attendees toured sites along the Lewis and Clark National Trail on the first day of the conference. Lewis and Clark College Professor Emeritus Dr. Stephen Dow Beckham narrated the bus tour, and participants visited with knowledgeable National Park Service and DHAP staff about the unique cultural resource management issues related to this resource at several stops along the route. The second day of the conference was held at Fort Vancouver. It was an opportunity to discuss legislation and policy issues impacting cultural resources, including reauthorization of the historic preservation fund, building the workforce, and making National Park Service programs more accessible, among other topics. Staff from the National Park Service presented on several of the agency's initiatives, including revising the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and climate change initiatives. The day ended with a tour of the Fort Vancouver site.

NCSHPO is a national non-profit advocacy organization whose members include each state's SHPO. NCSHPO's mission is to facilitate communication between SHPOs, federal agencies, and other organizations and educate the public and elected officials about the national historic preservation program, legislation, policies, and regulations. Special thanks to OPRD's Tammie Bowman, who coordinated the tours, lodging, meals, transportation, and other essential details. The event was a success in no small part due to her efforts.

Oregon Heritage Hosts the Oregon Main Street Conference, October 4-6, in Independence

Oregon's Main Street programs sustain and enhance the vitality of traditional commercial districts throughout the state. The 2023 Oregon Main Street Conference theme is "Idea to Implementation." The conference will reflect on the innovation happening in the state's Main Street organizations and focus on generating creative thinking about issues and opportunities impacting communities and developing programs and activities to bring about meaningful change. The conference is an opportunity to look at the "big picture" of why main street districts are so significant to the health and well-being of local communities – physically, economically, and socially. Sessions will cover various topics for both beginners and those with experience. The format includes keynotes, interactive workshops, and networking time. The conference will bring together staff and volunteers of organizations focusing on downtown historic preservation and economic development, downtown business and property owners, government leaders, chamber of commerce professionals and volunteers, and others interested in the future of downtown.

Update on the Oregon Special Assessment Property Tax Program

The Oregon Legislature created the Special Assessment Property Tax Program for Historic Properties (Special Assessment) in 1977 and revised and authorized the program multiple times since. The program offers a lower, "specially assessed" tax valuation for qualifying buildings for a ten-year benefit. The intent is to provide an owner tax savings over the period to make appropriate preservation improvements. A property must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places to qualify for the program, and all work must meet the federal Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

There are currently 163 historic properties participating in the program. Participation declined steadily to an average enrollment of 10-15 properties a year, down from hundreds between 1990 and 1994. The passages of Measures 5 and 50, which limited property tax liability and the financial benefit of the program, and increasing program requirements progressively made the program less attractive.

Preservation advocates and other stakeholders have worked closely with the Oregon Legislature to address the program's effectiveness. The ongoing conversation led to a temporary two-year extension of the program passed in the 2022 legislative session to allow time to develop a more comprehensive solution. Unfortunately, the Legislature did not reauthorize the program or an alternative during the most recent regular session. Governor Tina Kotek vetoed a separate initiative to explore other potential preservation incentives, including grants and tax credits. House Bill 2079 directed the Legislative Revenue Office (LRO) to study the possible implementation of a grant program to encourage historic property preservation. The Governor stated that the study "could and should" be done without statutory direction. Owners of historic properties will be able to enroll in the existing Special Assessment program through 2024 for the entire ten-year period ending in 2034. All properties already part of the program will participate until their expiration dates. The Heritage Division will continue to provide information to decision-makers and the preservation community as asked to support solutions to encourage investment in historic buildings across the state.

Oregon Heritage Division Welcomes New Staff

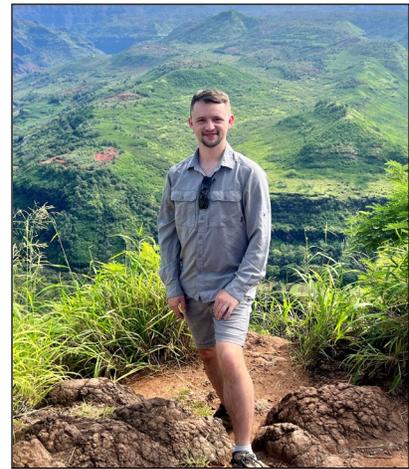
In August the Oregon Heritage Division welcomed two new teammates and started another staff person in a new position.

Koren Tippett joined the agency in January 2021 as the Archaeology Inventory and Survey Coordinator. She now steps into the role of the OPRD liaison in the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. In her new role, Koren will support the Go Bond and other improvement projects. Koren is a native of Sacramento, California, and previously worked as an archaeologist for the California Department of Transportation and the California State Historic Preservation Office. Koren received her master's degree in Anthropology with a focus in Archaeology from California State University Chico and also has a bachelor's degree in History from the University of California Davis. Her academic focus was in historical archaeology and has included excavation work at the Betty's Hope field school at a historical plantation in Antigua and thesis work conducted at the Sacramento City Cemetery. Koren enjoys camping, bowling, and watercolor.



Koren Tippett, OPRD Liaison

Josh Henderson steps into Koren's previous Archaeology Inventory and Survey Coordinator role. This position is within the SHPO's Preservation Bureau and administers the archaeological inventory program, state archaeological permits, and qualified archaeologist programs. Josh was born and raised in Salem, Oregon, and has enjoyed living throughout the Willamette Valley. Josh previously worked as an archaeologist with Historical Research Associates, Inc. and as the Education Manager at the Willamette Heritage Center. Josh received his master of science degree in Cultural and Environmental Resource Management from Central Washington University, where his archaeology-centered research focused on faunal and XRF analysis. He also holds a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from Western Oregon University, where he recently returned as an archaeology instructor. Josh enjoys curating an eclectic collection of houseplants with his partner and is an avid runner who enjoys the challenge of a good half-marathon.



Josh Henderson
Archaeology Survey
and Inventory Coordinator

Ian Ryan joins the team as the Administrative Support Specialist, supporting the Division's four citizen commissions and assisting in planning and coordinating Division events, such as the Oregon Main Street and Heritage Conferences, among many other duties. Ian grew up in Corvallis, majored in French and Spanish at the University of Oregon, and is currently working on a Master's degree in Public Administration focusing on local government at Portland State University. Having previously worked at Oregon State University and the Portland Bureau of Transportation, this is his first position with the State of Oregon. He loves to travel and has lived in Spain and Ukraine. He will try (almost) any pizza he comes across (and will tell you exactly why it's good, bad, or meh) and is a huge fan of Batman, Lord of the Rings, and U2.



Ian Ryan
Administrative Support Specialist

Prior Action by Commission: none

Action Requested: none

Attachments: none

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