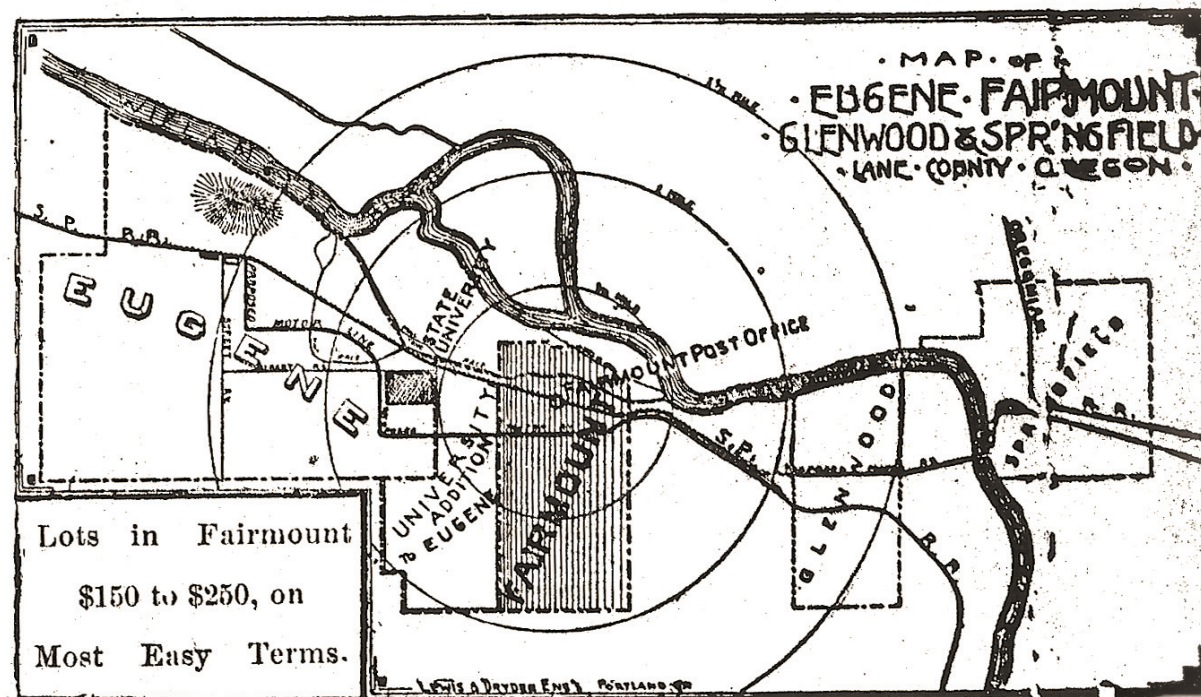




# FAIRMOUNT



## IN THE CENTER.

As the University is the leading institution of our city, it is but natural that the population should concentrate in that vicinity. The rapid growth made in Fairmount the past year is a fair sample of what may be expected in the future. Harken to the voice of prophesy and buy in Fairmount. Eugene, Springfield and Fairmount are fast growing into one large city with Fairmount in the center. These lots are only four blocks from the great University of Oregon, free.

GEO. M. MILLER & CO., owners, Eugene, Oregon.

# Fairmount Neighborhood—History, Stories, and Community

# Introduction

Why have Fairmount residents been happy living here? Perhaps their satisfaction is connected to Fairmount's location, perhaps to its physical geography, perhaps to the way residential development occurred, perhaps to the talents and quirks and generosity of earlier residents. This booklet describes Fairmount's history and provides answers to why many of us feel it is a wonderful place to live.

Over four-dozen neighbors volunteered as oral history subjects, interviewers, researchers, writers, and producers of this booklet. This booklet includes some excerpts from the oral histories, which are presented in italics. In addition, digital recording files and oral history transcripts will be donated to the Lane County Historical Society and Museum.

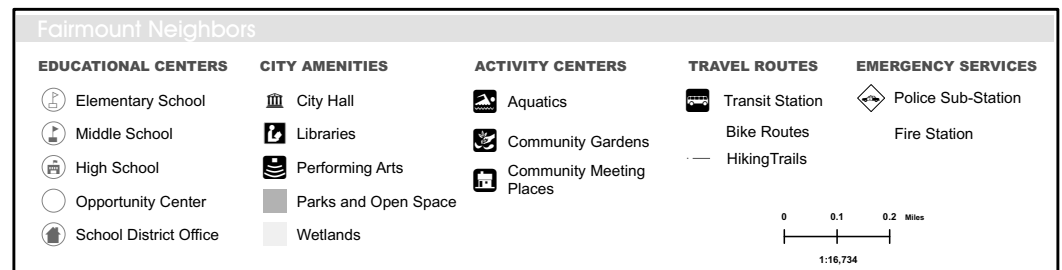
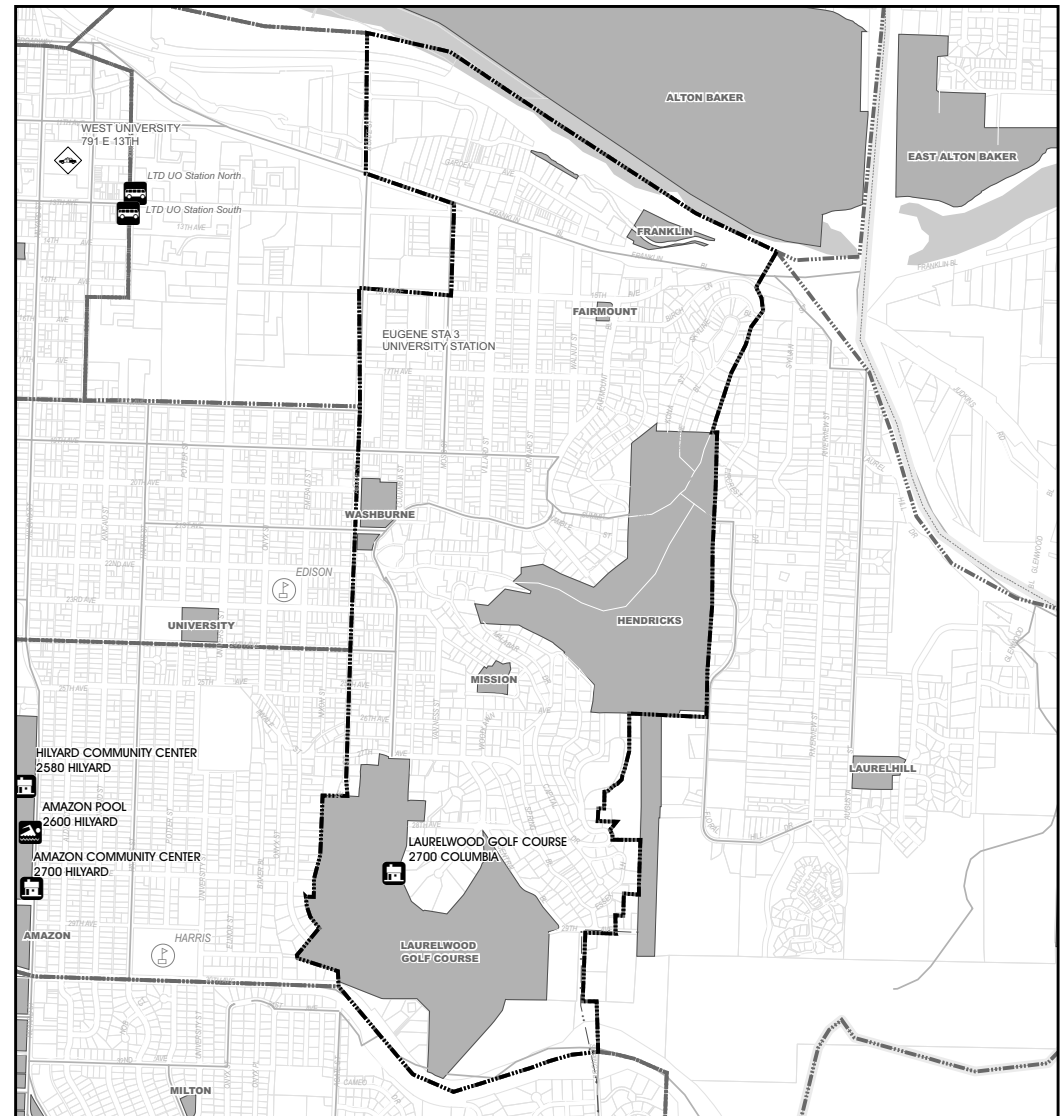
**CLAY STARLIN:** *I think the 40s and 50s were a more innocent time in the world, and Eugene was a very safe community. I think parents felt that their children were safe so you could kind of move around [as a kid].*

**ANITA JOHNSON:** *There were a lot more children in the neighborhood. There were professional people, academic people, and the graduate student group, and there were a fair number of working class people who could live in this neighborhood without having a lot of money.*

Published 2011 by Fairmount Neighbors. Made possible by a Neighborhood Matching Grant from the City of Eugene.

Cover photos (top to bottom): Eugene streetcar, Fairmount Loop. The McMorran house. View looking down Orchard Street, 1904. All courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum; (right): One of George Miller's advertisements for the town of Fairmount, published in the *Oregon State Journal* on November 24, 1894.

(Right) Fairmount neighborhood map. Courtesy of the City of Eugene.



**EDITH MADDON:** *The neighborhood was unique ... because of the closeness and because [there were] interesting people, just great people to be around.*

**MIR STARLIN:** *I think it was about as good as you could get for the times [for raising kids]. They had all the freedom in the world to come and go.*

**DENNIS HOFF:** *There were a lot of kids our age. They were from all walks of life. There were well-to-do kids, there were hardworking kids, but everyone was just a kid in the neighborhood, and it didn't make any difference. It was a unique blend of people. And everybody got along really great.*

## Kalapuya History

For thousands of years, the Kalapuya people lived around and very probably in the area we now call the Fairmount neighborhood. For instance, Fairmount Boulevard's geography makes it a prime site for human settlement, including that by the Kalapuya, because it follows an arc of elevated land high enough to avoid most flooding. Perhaps the best evidence of their residence is old photographs of the Hendricks Park area that show open, grassy fields dotted with Oregon White Oak rather than the denser stands of Douglas-fir that exist in much of the park today. As they did elsewhere, the Kalapuya likely used controlled burning to manage these oak-dominated woodlands and savannahs. These open landscapes encouraged good habitat for game and food plants. As the Kalapuya people stopped living in what is now the Eugene-Springfield area—due to devastating population losses from diseases contracted from fur trappers and traders

of European descent, and forced removal to reservations elsewhere in the Oregon Territory—the oak forest eventually transitioned to groves of less fire-resistant Douglas-fir.

Other evidence that the Kalapuyas used this area lies just across the river from Fairmount's northern boundary, in what is now the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park. An interview with a long-time area resident highlighted how this area, which was once adjacent to the main channel of a wider and more complex river system, used to be scattered with Kalapuya artifacts, such as mortars, pestles, and arrowheads.

## Fairmount — In the Center

"The new suburb of Eugene, filed November 5, 1890, offers unparalleled advantages to the home seeker," read the promotional story in the *Eugene Register's* July 4, 1891 edition. "Fairmount has a healthy location, has rich soil, no rocks or stumps and good drainage, pure, running water direct from the perpetual snow of the Cascade mountains.... There are more prospective improvements to be made in Fairmount than in any other suburb of Eugene. It is the better place for a city, and is where the town should have been in the beginning. It is high and dry, above any possibility of an overflow<sup>1</sup>.... Springfield and Eugene, being only three miles apart from center to center, must soon grow into one great city, of which Fairmount will be the heart."

<sup>1</sup> An obvious reference to "Skinnner's Mud Hole," Eugene City's original nickname.



This 1915 view from Hendricks Park shows the open meadows that suggest the Kalapuya lived in what is now the Fairmount neighborhood. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*



Original plat map of the town of Fairmount, 1890.

The man to contact for lot purchases, according to the article, was George Melvin Miller. Miller and University of Oregon (UO) professor John Straub had purchased 415 acres of the Donation Land Claim of William and Nancy Smith in 1890 for \$39,000. Since 1853, the Smiths and their children had used the land to grow crops and provide pasture for their dairy cattle. In November 1890, Miller filed a plat for the town of Fairmount (named after Philadelphia's Fairmount Park). It encompassed the land between the Willamette River on the north, Agate Street on the west, and approximately 21st Avenue on the south. It extended to the lower slopes of the hills on the east. In 1892, Fairmount was incorporated.

Miller kept the advertisements flowing for Fairmount lots. At frequent times in the early 1890s, one read in the *Eugene City Guard* the following information about the new town:

- 31 New Buildings Constructed the First Year! More lots are selling now at \$125 than were selling six months ago at \$100.
- The Free Oregon State University – Being the leading institution of Lane county, will always attract the wealthy and more intelligent class of citizens to that vicinity. Fairmount, located as it is in the very shadow of this seat of learning, is fast coming into favor as the most desirable residence property.
- Population increased from 7 to 114.
- The owners have 18 acres of riverfront land that they propose to donate for manufacturing, which fact is sure to secure the location in Fairmount of large factories.
- Post office with two daily mails. Two daily passenger trains and has horse cars within four blocks.

- Fairmount is a prohibition town, made so by the statutes of Oregon, which prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors within one mile of the University.

The ads always emphasized that Fairmount was “in the center.” Miller proclaimed that the consolidation of Eugene, Fairmount, and Springfield was inevitable. The resulting city would be the third-largest in Oregon, and Fairmount would clearly be its geographic center.

But Fairmount was only one of Miller's grandiose projects. Born on a Coburg farm to parents who had crossed the plains in 1853, Miller was a complicated man. An older brother was the infamous Joaquin (“Poet of the Sierras”) Miller, and George wished for Joaquin's fame without his notoriety. He practiced as an attorney, but his talents as a promoter, speculator, and visionary led him into real estate. He platted the town of Florence, promoted a deep-water harbor on the Siuslaw River, planned a highway linking Florence with New York, had numerous projects in Alaska, and even obtained a patent on a flying machine.

Miller's involvement with the Siuslaw and Eastern Railway and Navigation Company could have impacted Fairmount development. The goal was to build a railroad between Eugene and Florence, connecting with the Southern Pacific tracks at Villard Street and Franklin Boulevard (then called University Avenue). The new railway's tracks would have proceeded diagonally southwest through Fairmount, with depot grounds between Columbia and Emerald streets. This effort failed. Miller sold out his interest in Fairmount in 1895, but continued to sell lots when he was not in Alaska. Eventually, Martin Svarverud became the exclusive real estate sales agent.

By 1902, Fairmount claimed over 300 resi-

dents, but growth had slowed. Miller's lack of capital and financial support resulted in a dearth of the public infrastructure he had promised. Sidewalks, graded and graveled streets, street lighting, a public water supply, street trees, and fire protection were slow to materialize. In that year, Eugene became interested in annexing the town of Fairmount.

At the first “mass meeting” (i.e., public hearing) to discuss extending Eugene's city limits to include Fairmount, questions were raised regarding the cost to Eugene citizens. Mayor Chrisman appointed a committee to look into this and, on December 26, 1902, it reported that, based on Fairmount's and Eugene's assessments, the initial costs of providing infrastructure to Fairmount would be made up over the years by Fairmount's growth. The *Daily Eugene Guard*, which went on record favoring the annexation, editorialized: “At present there is no way to compel grading streets or construction of sidewalks. Once part of Eugene, the suburb would secure home-builders who could not be induced under any consideration to make homes there under present conditions.”

Eugene's City Council approved the report and voted unanimously in favor of annexation. It then prepared a resolution requesting Lane County legislators to introduce an amendment to the city charter, changing the city's boundaries to include Fairmount. This change was approved during the 1903 legislative session.

Improvements to Fairmount occurred soon thereafter. On August 29, 1903, the *Eugene Weekly Guard* wrote: “Since the new corporation bill, taking in Fairmount, became a law, a number of improvements have been made in that suburb, and now the city has ordered a six-foot sidewalk constructed on the south side of East

Thirteenth street ... Several years ago sidewalk was laid in several places along that street, but it has gone to rack and is now worse than none."

Improvements, including street grading and graveling, street lighting, tree planting, and home mail delivery, continued in the following years. In 1909, the Eugene Hose Company began providing fire protection, and a water main and sewer system were installed. The electric line was extended to take in more Fairmount properties. As residents began to purchase automobiles, street improvements became a high priority.

While today Fairmount cannot claim the distinction of being the center of a consolidated Eugene-Fairmount-Springfield, it can claim to be the only incorporated town yet annexed by the city of Eugene.

## Streetcars— The "Fairmount Loop"

The year 1909 was a big year for the Fairmount neighborhood. With completion of the "Fairmount Loop" electric streetcar line, extension of a water main to Moss Street, and grading and graveling of Fairmount Boulevard, the neighborhood became a fully connected part of Eugene. What essentially was the urban sprawl of its time was propelled forward. The *Eugene Daily Guard* reported on September 21 of that year: "The new (streetcar) line will open up very valuable residence property, which has heretofore been kept off the market for the reason that it was comparatively inaccessible. After the line is in operation, a half-hour car service will be the means of selling this sightly

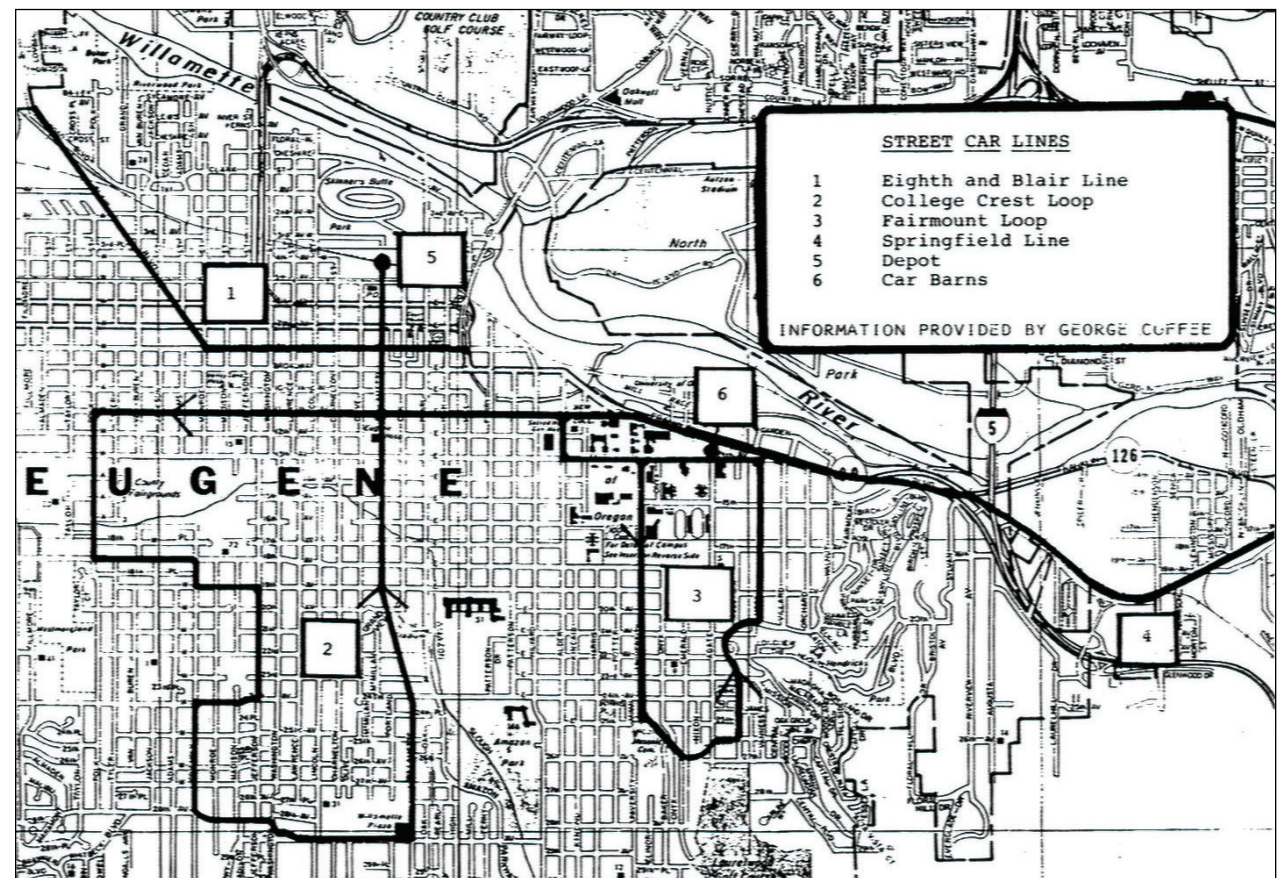
property for residence purposes."

Electric streetcars had a major impact on the history of central Eugene. Their heyday was short-lived, however. By the mid 1920s, they were on their way out, as cars and busses took over. Streetcars were seen as a source of traffic congestion and costly street repairs, as holes developed near rails. Trolley wires were "unsightly," and the passing streetcars caused static on newly popular radio sets.

In April 1927, the Eugene City Council voted to replace streetcars with a motor bus franchise.



Eugene streetcar, Fairmount Loop. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*



Eugene streetcar route map. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*

The South Pacific Motor Transport purchased the assets of the Eugene Street Car Company and began local bus service. By October, many of the tracks had been removed or paved over. Remnants of the Fairmount Loop tracks can still be found peeking through pavement down the centers of University, Columbia, and Moss streets.

The “Fairmount Loop” was more than a mile and a half long. It followed University Street south and then turned east to the Masonic Cemetery, hugging the contour of the foothills to near East 26th and Columbia. It then moved north on Columbia to Fairmount Boulevard, around the bend at Fairmount Heights and down Moss Street to 13th, and finally went back west to a junction at the university. The “Car Barn” was located at 13th near Beech Street, which at that time was one block west of Agate.

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**Don Hunter:** *I really missed [the street cars] when they took them out. ... [At] 26th/Columbia, they had a round, yellow waiting building. ... And there was a boardwalk coming up the hill. ... We came out on the streetcar one summer day. Got off, walked up [the hill], and ate a picnic. Found [lots of] strawberries.*

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## Streetscape: The Greening of Fairmount

### FAIRMOUNT

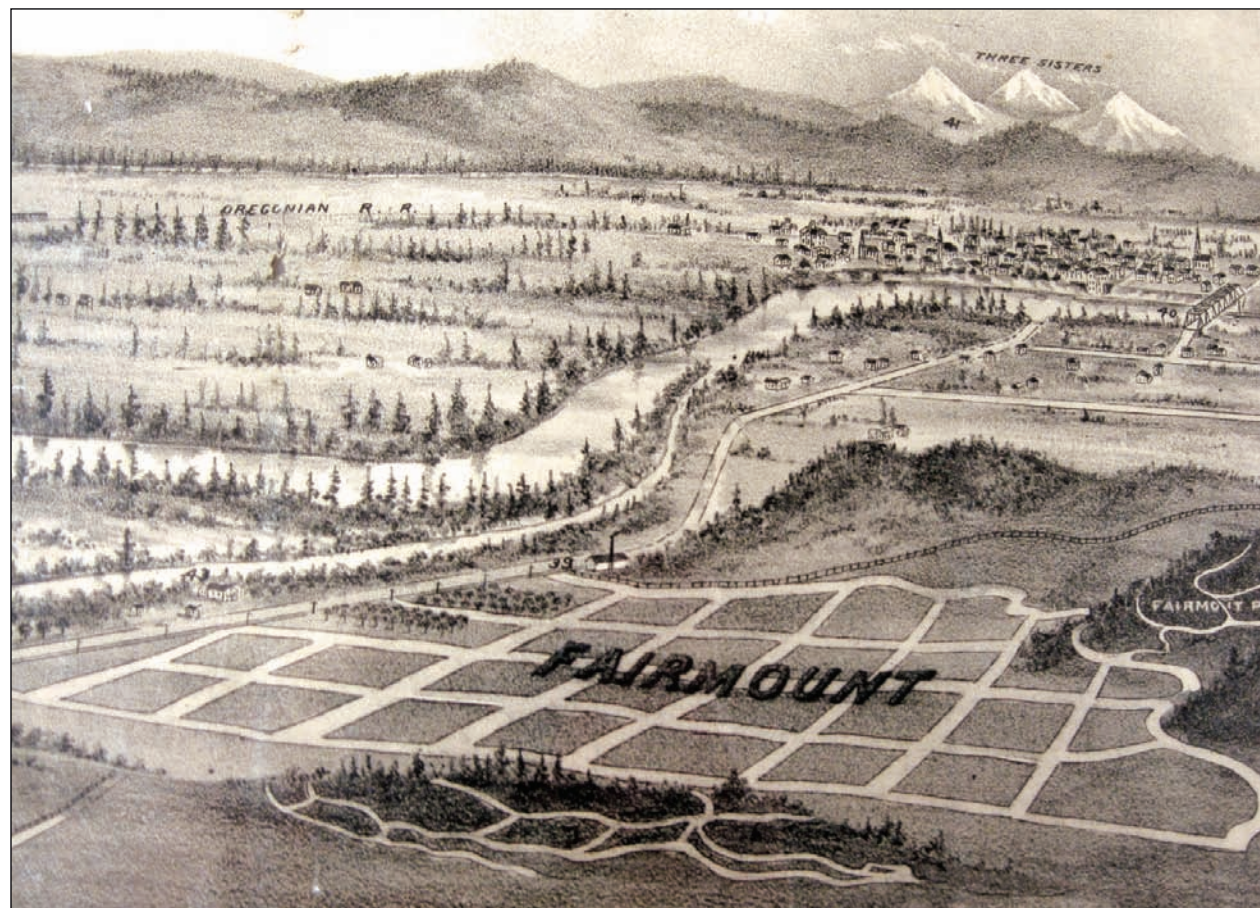
Fairmount neighborhood’s current streetscape reflects its geography, the layout of its earliest days, and its development southward as the

streetcar and then the automobile gained popularity. Geography grants our neighborhood three distinct landscapes: the floodplain in the north, the terrace nestled between the floodplain and the hills to east and south, and the southern hills bounded by 30th Avenue. The Willamette River acts as the northernmost boundary of the neighborhood. Agate Street and Hendricks Park frame Fairmount to the west and east, respectively.

When George Miller purchased land east of Eugene in 1890, he platted the town (now neighborhood) of Fairmount as a simple grid in

the floodplain framed by boulevards hugging the terrace area. The town was nestled between a rise on the west and a wooded hill on the east. An 1890 lithograph shows the main streets in Fairmount running north and south, consistent with the city of Eugene. At the time this lithograph was made, the floodplain and terrace areas of Fairmount were bare of trees, with native oak forest covering the hillsides to the east and south.

Miller’s original concept included residential, commercial, and industrial development, though little of the commercial or industrial develop-



1890 lithograph of the Fairmount area. Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.

ment materialized. However, Miller's plans continue to influence the layout of Fairmount, especially its northern sections. For instance, Villard Boulevard (now Street), laid out by Miller as a 100-foot-wide boulevard with a median to serve as the grand entrance into Fairmount and onward to Florence via the planned railroad, still serves as a gateway into the neighborhood. By 1902, the street layout in the floodplain and terrace areas of Fairmount was nearly in place, following Miller's plan. Walnut, Orchard, Moss, Columbia, and Agate streets exist today much as they were platted: a grid featuring wide roads and large blocks, with larger lots to the south of 17th. Fairmount Boulevard was built as an 80-foot-wide road curving along the base of the terraced hill, heading up to the area later known as Fairmount Heights, and ending in what later became Hendricks Park. While Birch Lane did not yet exist, the planned streets of Cascade, Summit, and Parkside radiated up the hill in a confidently coherent way.

As residents purchased lots and built homes, Miller continued to plan, and sometimes improve, Fairmount's infrastructure. He oversaw the planting of 500 cherry trees, which from later photographs seemed to be clustered as orchards in southeast Fairmount. A panoramic photo of the area, dated approximately 1911, shows streets flanked by grassy, uncurbed medians and boardwalks down one or both sides. Boardwalks existed on 15th, 17th, and 19th avenues, and extended down the north/south streets from University Avenue (now Franklin Boulevard) to about 17th, where they continued as dirt paths. Homes lined the north side of University Avenue, framed by a pastoral scene of riparian vegetation where Fairmount met the Willamette River. The blocks to the south extended solidly

from street to street, with no evidence of alleys yet. For the most part, the neighborhood still consisted of farmhouses and small orchards dotting the mostly open land.

By 1908, a street tree plan recommended planting 1,000 trees "so that passengers on the Southern Pacific could admire the symmetry and regularity of rows." The plan called for maple trees to be planted on Villard Boulevard and Fairmount Boulevard, horse chestnut trees down Orchard and Moss streets, walnut trees down Walnut, and linden trees down Columbia. Although the Fairmount neighborhood hosts many street trees today, one has to search for trees that might date back to the 1908 tree plan. For example, the northwest corner of Villard Street and 19th was home to two large bigleaf maples until one was removed in late 2010. A 1911 photograph of the same corner shows two small trees in the same spots. Likewise, horse chestnuts currently line the west side of the 1500 block of Orchard Street and both sides of the next block to the south. A 1936 aerial photo-

graph shows trees in the same locations.

That photograph also shows the neighborhood's greatest concentration of dwellings along Moss Street, following the streetcar line, with street trees and backyard trees visible. A large concentration of dwellings and street trees existed in the blocks along 13th, which was then an arterial street connecting the intersection of Franklin Boulevard and Villard Boulevard with downtown. Tree-lined 15th headed east and around Judkins Point. Also at that time, an orchard still existed in the area between unpaved Orchard and Walnut streets. Trees and homes lined the well-established residential area around Fairmount Boulevard between 15th and 17th, including the lower part of Birch Lane. Fairmount Heights, including the then privately owned Washburne Park, presented a gracious sweep of lawn and tree groupings, including native Oregon White Oaks.

Today, Fairmount residents have established verdant landscaping and flower gardens throughout their neighborhood. Pedestrians



1909 view of Fairmount from Hendricks Park. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum*

walking down the alleys can see many backyards with abundant vegetable gardens and fruit trees, some of which likely date back to the former orchards in this area. In the southern, hillier part of Fairmount, residents weave landscaping around the native oaks and bravely attempt to protect ornamental plants and vegetable gardens from the deer and turkeys that share this part of our neighborhood.

For more than 100 years, the street layout in the more northern part of our neighborhood as envisioned by George Melvin Miller has stayed nearly intact. The street trees, while not the shady boulevards first advertised, have gradually filled in to frame an established neighborhood. And as the southern hills of our neighborhood developed, the Fairmount tradition of a well-ordered, tree-lined residential area continued.

**GEORGE MCCULLY:** *My great-grandfather, Americus Taylor, owned the house at the corner of Orchard and Fairmount. The orchard was planted ... between 1915 and 1920. ... My dad told stories of AT drilling holes into the ground and putting dynamite down to break up the shale. There's a sandstone layer that's very, very close to the surface in some places, and he would put dynamite down in the hole, and set it off to break the shale up so that the roots of the trees that they planted would be able to find a way to go down.*

**MARGE RAMEY:** *[When] I first came to Eugene in the fall of 1943, I lived at the corner of 20th and University Street. Things were quite different in this neighborhood then. ... I could lie on my top bunk and look out toward Judkins Point, and it was totally without trees. You could see the wild*

*grasses turn in the fall to silvers and grays and browns, but there were no houses.*

**MAGGIE GONTRUM:** *One summer, I used to walk to the U of O when I was taking a Russian course. I remember dreading going across Villard on 15th because it was a huge expanse of treeless, hot space. It wasn't until some architecture students decided to plant trees in the median there on Villard that it became a pleasant and shady street.*

## Residential Development

Home construction in Fairmount and beyond the boundaries of the original Fairmount town limits escalated after the area became part of Eugene. The Leavitt Wright house at 2262 Birch Lane was built in 1906. A Eugene building record occurred in 1909 when 266 homes were built, of which 56 were in Fairmount. The *Eugene Daily Guard* wrote: "In proportion to (its) size, Fairmount broke the record." One of the homes built in Fairmount that year was the impressive Dugald Campbell house (1653 Fairmount Boulevard). Another building permit in the amount of \$500 was issued to J.H. Pitney for a "cottage on Orchard avenue between 13th and 15th streets."

Fairmount Heights was platted at this time and lots offered for sale. It was located south of Fairmount, where Fairmount Boulevard loops east to Hendricks Park, and it followed directly on the completion of the streetcar line up Moss Street and over to Columbia. This allowed easy access from downtown Eugene and the univer-



The Dugald Campbell house. Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.

sity to the fine residences that were developed on the hill.

One of the first homes in Fairmount Heights was the Alton Hampton house at 2237 Spring Boulevard. Now known as the Chancellor's House (also known as Treetops), it was constructed by Tirrell and Hunter in the Craftsman style. Other notable homes followed, including the Carl Washburne house (2425 Fairmount) and the Fellman-Jewett house (2550 Fairmount), both in the Dutch/Colonial Revival style. The McMorran house (2315 McMorran)



The Fellman-Jewett house. Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.



The McMorran house. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*

was built in the Norman Farmhouse style and is now the home of University of Oregon presidents.

Fairmount Heights was followed by Chula Vista Park, a large 155-acre addition south of Fairmount Heights extending to what is now Laurelwood Golf Course. "The boulevards, avenues and streets have been most carefully planned and nearly every part of it overlooking the city," read the promotional literature. "Oak and fir groves are dotted over the tract to enhance its beauty." The Capital Hill addition, east of Chula Vista Park, was also platted.

Another important addition was Victoria Heights, which bordered what is now Birch Lane to the top of Judkins Point. A large ad in the *Eugene Daily Guard* on April 26, 1910, announced "the most beautifully laid out addition of any this side of Portland." The ad listed a number of building restrictions, such as "Shall not erect less than \$1,000 Bungalow or Cottage or \$2,000 House" and "All frame buildings must be properly painted." With these restrictions, the developers declared that Victoria Heights would be "Eugene's Swellest Residence District." Two fine Tudor Revival homes were built in this neighborhood in the 1920s.

Extensive street paving and automobile acquisition led to a wave of residential building in the Fairmount neighborhood. By the late 1930s, almost 400 homes had been constructed. Just over half were bungalows, a style that had become popular in Eugene. The second-most popular style was Craftsman, followed by Colonial, English Cottage, and Tudor. But the diverse architectural styles also included Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Mediterranean, California Mission, and many others. Overall, Fairmount residents displayed a desire for spaciousness and well-constructed homes.

Two events in 1948 both altered and preserved the character of Fairmount. Major road improvements were made to Franklin Boulevard, changing it from a minor two-lane road that connected Eugene and Springfield to a major four-lane thoroughfare. This effectively divided Fairmount into two pieces—the once residential area between Franklin Boulevard and the river and the area south of Franklin. It is interesting to note that the first two Fairmount lots sold by George Miller in 1890 were located along Franklin where the Best Western New Oregon Motel now stands. Two properties north of Franklin are listed on the National Register of Historic Places—the Charles S. Williams House at 1973 Garden Avenue and the Howard Hall House at 1991 Garden Avenue.

The second event was Eugene's adoption of a comprehensive zoning ordinance, which designated much of Fairmount as R1, Single Family Residential. This was timely because, though little building had occurred during the Depression and World War II, the huge influx of new residents following the war created a massive housing shortage in the city. Most of the new construction took place in established neigh-

borhoods, as well as on newly annexed land. In other parts of the city, where zoning permitted, multi-family units became popular, and massive high-rise apartments were built. In Fairmount, vacant lots were infilled with modern single-family houses, and home building quickly proceeded up the hillsides to the ridge line. The 1950s also saw an increase in architect-designed homes. Between 1940 and 1960, the number of homes in Fairmount more than doubled.

Home building continued in the latter part of the century, so that by 2000 Fairmount contained more than 1,300 housing units, the vast majority being single-family homes. The major change to Fairmount's residential character in those years was the development and implementation of the University of Oregon's East Campus Plan. The university's Housing Department was authorized to purchase and condemn properties located generally between Agate and Villard streets from 14th to about 18th avenues. By 1981, the university owned approximately 70 percent of the homes in that area. Some of the homes were demolished so the land could be used for university buildings or parking, but most were rented. As the appear-



The McCully house. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*

ance of those homes deteriorated and traffic increased in the neighborhood, the Eugene City Council undertook a Special Area Study to address land use and transportation issues and to develop policies to accommodate the needs of both Fairmount neighbors and the university.

**MARVIN KRENK:** *[This house at 2100 Eaton] was built by Alan Eaton ... in 1902. He ... [established] the Art and Architecture School at the University. [When we moved here in 1946], we used to be able to sit here and look over, and there was one house at the corner of Summit. There was the one house up out the back part of Elk ... plus the house next door. ... That's the only population we had.*

**STAN COOK:** *[1832 Longview] We've talked about the growth of the trees and how when we moved in here [in 1962] there was a view out to the valley and it's largely gone now. And we've talked about how when we moved in, there was a darkness across the river. There were very few buildings ... there was very little light over there.*

**BERT HOEFLICH:** *This is an older neighborhood. Most of the homes are fortunate enough to have "a real [front] yard." Down here on Fairmount, all of the houses are set back except one [2125 Fairmount] ... built sometime between '52 and '60. ... [That house has] a swimming pool. [Our neighbor] was not pleased that the house broke that look—that large front-yard appearance.*

**STAN COOK:** *[The Richard S. Smith house at 2765 Fairmount, designed by Pietro Belluschi] has a French country slate roof. [Belluschi was] a celebrated architect from Portland, who did the Portland Art Museum and any number of churches, including*

*Central Lutheran Church. And he did the Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco.*

## Commercial and Industrial Development

George Miller's original efforts to develop Fairmount in the 1890s brought residential growth but little commercial or industrial activity, with the exception of two stone quarries. His plans for large factories along the riverfront never materialized. By 1909, however, Fairmount businesses included Williams Bakery, at 1760 East 13th (currently the UO Matthew Knight Arena and Alumni Association sites) as well as a sash and door company, two groceries, and a butcher shop. A planing mill and furniture factory was added in 1910.

During the next decade, Franklin Boulevard was graded and graveled to improve the county road that paralleled the railroad right of way through Fairmount. By 1921, the Owl Garage at Franklin and Walnut marked the neighborhood's first automobile-oriented business. In addition to Williams Bakery, businesses along 13th Avenue included Hayes Scott's Grocery, Goodchild Tool Company, and Cullen Confectionery. Other businesses in the Fairmount area included a wood sawyer, three well drillers, a house mover, a civil engineer, and a transportation company.

By 1925, several businesses had located on Franklin Boulevard, including a soda pop factory, two filling stations, the Franklin Boulevard

Garage, and Vail & Lutkins Plumbing. Other businesses included Fairmount Grocery and Harley Davidson on 13th Street, florists on Garden Avenue and Columbia Street, greenhouses at 15th and Walnut, as well as contractors and painters. To the south, Eugene View Dairy (also known as Chula Vista Dairy or Reed's Dairy) was located at 27th Avenue and Chula Vista.

In the 1930s, the number of businesses continued to increase, especially along Franklin Boulevard. They included two restaurants, a blacksmith shop, a clothes cleaner, and an auto wrecker. The 19th and Agate area also began to develop as a neighborhood commercial center, with Eliza Norton's Grocery (currently Sun Automotive) and Gates Service Station (now Tom's Market). Laurelwood Golf Course replaced the Eugene View Dairy. By 1938, two tire/auto repair businesses, a broom factory, and a machine shop had joined the businesses on Franklin.

Following World War II, as many returning



Del Hoff's Ice Cream, 19th and Agate. Courtesy of the Hoff family.

servicemen enrolled in the University of Oregon on the GI bill, the demand for nearby housing and services increased. A variety of commercial and manufacturing establishments located in Fairmount. They included timber products firms, auto-oriented businesses, a brick mason, a granite and marble company, and a heating and sheet metal firm. Residents had several groceries to choose from, such as Moss Street Grocery at 1704 Moss, Barlows Grocery with a butcher at 1490 East 19th, and Marketeria at 2390 Agate, which offered both a butcher and rental freezer lockers. The Polar Bear Restaurant at 1284 Moss provided dining out. Tommy Williams Flower Shop and Greenhouses operated at Walnut and 15th.

By 1955, Irish & Swartz grocery (now Market of Choice) and Tiffany-Davis variety (now Hiron's) had located along Franklin as well as three service stations and the Flagstone Motel. Orchard Street Grocery at 1697 Orchard joined the existing mom-and-pop groceries, while Hamilton's Boarding House on Moss Street and Ford's Dinner House and Drive-In on Franklin offered restaurant fare and Pengra's Ice Berg Ice Cream started the ice-cream tradition at Agate and 19th. Kaarhus Craft Shop at 1366 Moss was building McKenzie River drift boats.

Many of these businesses still existed in 1965. In addition, five gas stations and four motels were located along a seven-block stretch of Franklin. Laurelwood Supper Club offered dining and dancing, while MacDonald's offered hamburgers at 1417 Villard. The 19th and Agate Street hub included Hodges Market (owned by butcher Tom Hodges), Sherbecks Enco Service Station, and Del Hoff's Ice Cream, which replaced Pengra's.

The businesses at 19th and Agate have long

been an important part of the Fairmount neighborhood and larger community. The southwest corner has been occupied since 1931, first as a service station and then as a market (since about 1945). The southeast corner was first a grocery in the 1930s and became an auto repair and service station by 1970. For more than a decade, the house currently occupied by Beppe and Gianni's Trattoria was the Book & Tea shop, offering tea while one browsed for books.

For as long as many can remember—possibly since the building was built in 1946—an ice cream business has occupied 1605 E 19th: Pengra's Ice Berg Ice Cream from 1952 to 1959; Del Hoff's Ice Cream (owned by the Hoff family) from 1959 to 1968; Gantsy's Ice Cream (owned by the Gant family) until the 1980s; Prince Pückler's Gourmet Ice Cream, established in 1987 by Jim Robertson, co-owner, after the space had been vacant for some time. Prince Pückler's is a favorite neighborhood hangout—even President-to-be Barack Obama satisfied his ice-cream craving there in 2008. And many of the neighborhood's young adults have found summer employment there over the years. Various businesses have occupied the other spaces in the building. The early 1950s and 1960s saw Club Cleaners, Sparks TV & Appliance, J&B Laundromat, Golden Washboard Laundromat, and the Fairmount Barber Shop. (Some of you may remember the barber's pole on the outside of the building, which remained long after the barber left.) Other businesses included Mickey's Delicatessen, Domino's Pizza, and Berry Patch Children's Clothing. A recent addition is the Eugene City Bakery, started in 1997 by Charles Koehler and purchased by DeeAnne Hall in 2008.

Fairmount Neighborhood has been fortunate

to have had supportive and conveniently located businesses in our community over the years. We look forward to more commercial activities within the neighborhood that will provide goods and services within walking distance, such as our local Sunday farmers' market.

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**GEORGE CURRIN:** *Some of the nice things that the neighborhood had [were] all the little corner grocery stores. ... As kids we made our rounds to the penny candies: one at 13th/Columbia, one across from Maude Kerns, one at 17th/Moss, one at 17th/Orchard. Tom's Market [19th/Agate] is the only one still surviving.*

**ANITA JOHNSON:** *[Robertson's at 17th/Moss]—the kids were really sad when that closed, 'cause you could get penny candy on the way home. Those little stores all died when supermarkets came in.*

**DENNIS, DOUG AND DARLENE HOFF, RAY SCOFIELD:** *The market at 19th and Agate ... Tommy Hodges Market had a meat section ... the best meat in town. People came from all over to buy their meat.*

**MARGE RAMEY:** *Tom's Market has been here since I came in '43, because our housemother bought the meat for the [sorority] there.*

**GEORGE McCULLY AND RAY SCOFIELD:** *Kaarhus was a cabinetmaker down on Moss, who made McKenzie River boats. The great thing about it was, you could take your wagon down there and fill it with the greatest wood scraps in all the world. That's when my son became a carpenter. With a hammer [and nails], he could build a fort for*

days. When you ran out, you went down again and got in their throwaway bin.

**RAY SCOFIELD:** *The Eugene Granite and Marble Works [sold] headstones, “the only one in the world that does shape carving.” Their famous shape carving came from the fact that they were willing to take the time [to sandblast multiple layers], so [the figures] had shape. [Sample headstones] were all placed in a beautiful miniature cemetery that showed the various kinds of [work] they did. [The cemetery was] right on Franklin Blvd., the only road to California at that time.*

**DOUG HOFF:** *There was a lot in the neighborhood at that time, because you had Oregon football at Hayward Field, you had the fireworks, you still had Mac Court. ... It brought a lot of people out in that neighborhood. ... On a nice evening, you had college students, and then you had people from the neighborhood, and we would have lines out the door [at Del Hoff’s Ice Cream Store].*

## Parks and Open Space

### HENDRICKS PARK: EUGENE’S FIRST PARK

In 1906, the Thomas Hendricks family picnicked with Eugene Mayor Francis Wilkins and his family on a hill overlooking Eugene. Moved by the panoramic view, Thomas and Martha Hendricks purchased 47 acres of land and donated it to the city. Wilkins persuaded the

city to buy 31 adjoining acres. Protection from burning, grazing, and logging resulted in natural succession, producing the majestic stands of Douglas-fir that currently grace Hendricks Park. Beautiful stands of Oregon White Oak also persist in some areas. With 200-year-old trees and rare tall bugbane, the park is one of the premier natural urban areas in the Northwest and a crucial part of our community’s heritage.

In 1938, Wilkins presented the Hendricks Park picnic shelter to the citizens of Eugene, and it was later named after him to honor his 30 years of service. In March 1999, a fierce wind-storm uprooted 24 large Douglas-firs, two of which crashed onto the timbered shelter, sparing only the stone fireplace. The city rebuilt the F.M. Wilkins Shelter, rededicating it in November 2000.

In 1951, the Eugene Men’s Camellia and Rhododendron Society created the park’s Rhododendron Garden, which was dedicated in 1954. Currently, the 5,000 specimens in the 12-acre garden include more than 2,000 varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas, and some are found nowhere else.

In 2000, the Eugene City Council accepted the *Hendricks Park Forest Management Plan*, a comprehensive plan developed by city staff with help from ecosystem experts and local citizens. The plan serves as a prototype for managing other parks in Eugene and cities across the nation. One of its recommendations was to create a garden showcasing the variety and horticultural uses of local plants. The Hendricks Park Native Plant Garden, near the F.M. Wilkins Shelter, forms a living bridge between the Rhododendron Garden



View from Hendricks Park, looking northwest toward Skinner's Butte (1908). Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.

and the native forest. The garden is dedicated to Mary Rear Blakely, late wife of Jerry Blakely, who led the funding effort.

Building on a tradition of public involvement, a group of citizens founded Friends of Hendricks Park (FoHP) in 2001 to provide stewardship for Hendricks Park through education, restoration, and community support. Since its inception, FoHP has partnered with the City of Eugene, park staff, and volunteers to promote forest restoration projects—such as ivy removal, Oak Knoll restoration, and trail improvement—and to install educational kiosks, enhance the Rhododendron Garden, host tours, support elementary school educational programs, and provide grants to Northwest Youth Corps.

## FAIRMOUNT PARK

On the corner of 15th and Fairmount is a small, 0.68-acre well-developed “pocket park.” The City of Eugene purchased the land for \$205.31 in 1946 from Lane County. Development came later with the construction of a wading pool in 1948 and installation of playground equipment in 1949. A shelter with restrooms, picnic tables, and an open grassy area completed the park.

Fairmount Park has been an active neighborhood park, and for many years it offered a very popular and well-attended supervised summer program. Due to large budget cuts in spring 1982, the program was abandoned and the wading pool was closed, though residents raised money to operate the pool that summer. During the rest of the 1980s and 1990s, summers in the park were very quiet, though the playground equipment was still popular, along with pickup baseball and football.

In 2003, there was a resurgence of interest in the park. Neighbors received a City of Eugene \$1,000 Neighborhood Matching Grant, which enabled them to remove ivy, plant native plants, and build an informational kiosk. In 2004, arson destroyed the old restrooms and picnic shelter. Neighbors helped demolish the old building, and the restroom was rebuilt. The park once again became a center of community activity, with spring clean-up work parties, rummage sales for park improvements, and Fourth of July celebrations. Beginning in 2007, an informal committee, Fairmount Park Friends, raised over \$100,000 for park improvements, including a spray park and basketball court. Another neighborhood matching grant funded four new benches and increased the number of native plant beds. In July 2009, the neighborhood celebrated the spray park opening with an ice cream social.

## WASHBURNE PARK

Washburne Park is a 4.7-acre park at East 21st and Agate in the middle of an established neighborhood. It was part of the original Washburne Estate gardens and lawns, and was owned and maintained for public use for 25 years by Carl and Narcissa Washburne. Carl, a



The Washburne house. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*



Wading pool at the Washburne estate.

prominent businessman and city councilor, was a partner in McMorran and Washburne department store. The land became a city park after Narcissa died in 1961. It was enlarged in 1962, when the city purchased the hillside south of 21st Avenue.

The Washburne Estate grounds were designed by George Otten, a landscape architect from Portland. The park now has large lawns with mature plantings on the edges, an abandoned pool, perennial borders, and handmade benches. The concrete wading pool was drained after a city ordinance required such pools to be fenced for safety reasons.

Currently, the park is a favorite place for Sunday summer concerts. Originally sponsored by South University Neighborhood Association, concerts are now sponsored by the City of Eugene and supported by local businesses.

## LAURELWOOD GOLF COURSE

The land encompassing the present Laurelwood Golf Course was originally the Eugene View Dairy, owned by Dick Reed. In 1928, a group of Portland doctors purchased the 92 acres and developed the land as an 18-hole golf course, which was completed and opened in 1933. In 1950, the course was sold to a group of Eugene dentists, but it was reduced to nine holes in 1958 due to insufficient capital to maintain an 18-hole facility. At that time, a tram was built to eliminate the steep climb to the clubhouse. The tram was financed by selling bonds to members and charging a fare for each ride. The new owners sold off three to four acres of the property for home sites along Baker Boulevard and Emerald Street.

The rest of the golf course was sold to Eugene

School District 4J in 1965 for the purpose of constructing a high school, but 4J leased it to the City of Eugene for \$1 a year. The city then operated the golf course, ultimately purchasing it from the school district via a bond election in 1968. The land was annexed to the city in 1969. The city operated the golf course at a considerable subsidy until September 1979, when it contracted with private operators. This arrangement continues to this day.

For a time, a restaurant and lounge operated on the top floor of the club house, but the license was revoked in 1972 due to complaints from neighbors. The space was then converted to a public meeting space and rental venue for private events. In 1986, the city applied for a permit to expand the operation back to 18 holes. Following public hearings, which provoked intense support and opposition, a permit was granted. However, the permit expired before a developer was secured.

## MISSION PARK

In the southeast hills of the Fairmount neighborhood is a 1.93-acre, undeveloped piece of land called Mission Park, which lies at the end of Mission Street. Beginning in 1928, Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) purchased several parcels in this area as a potential site for the Chula Vista Reservoir. In 1956, neighbors asked the city to develop the site as a public park. Although EWEB decided not to build a reservoir until sometime in the future and authorized the city to make the site available for park development, no further action ensued. EWEB still owns the land, and mows the park several times each year, but has no plans to build a reservoir.

**ANITA JOHNSON, MARGE RAMEY, MIR STARLIN:** *Fairmount Park was a wonderful part of [the kids'] lives. It was great for the young children. There was always something going on. In the summer, there were park leaders, there were overnights, one every summer ... for all ages. The leaders were marvelous, and the wading pool. It was amazing what that little park added to the neighborhood.*

**MAGGIE GONTRUM:** *Fairmount Park was a very, very special place. Our kids would take their lunch, and we wouldn't see them until the afternoon. A lot of our life revolved around the park because there was a park leader, [who] supervised the pool and supervised [arts and crafts]. The Siegals, who lived up on Sunset, erected a wooden bench in honor of their son, who was teaching at the University of Washington and who died suddenly. He had been a park leader, so they donated the first bench to the park. We were able to raise all that money [for Fairmount Park restoration] because people LOVED their memories of the wading pool.*

**CLAY AND SCOTT STARLIN:** *Fairmount Park was definitely the neighborhood place to rendezvous [for] baseball and football for the guys. There was a swing set and merry-go-round. And there was a wading pool. When you went to play in the park, it was usually to play a game, and you'd get some other people to come along.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *Washburne Park was where we went in the neighborhood, and we would play ball. At that time, Mrs. Washburne kept the pond full of water, and there was a caretaker who lived there who was just a super nice guy to all the kids. ... It was a place where we went and caught frogs and tadpoles; we waded around. It was also*

*much brushier; it's real open now. So we had tunnels and forts and everything, all through all of that brush. And we could go in there and play for hours. And the parents would come over and play softball and stuff with us. It was a really nice park.*

**HATTIE MAE NIXON:** *The president of [the 4-H leaders], Jeanie Morton, [told me] a favorite story ... about the Laurelwood Golf Course area. "When I was a little girl, I grew up at Wendling, which was a big lumber mill north of Springfield. For entertainment, every summer the mill would get out a flat car and we'd all drive our carriages, dressed in our Sunday best. The train would bring us down to the train station [in Eugene]. We'd take our carriages off, and we drove to this beautiful park that was in the southern part of Eugene."*

## Churches and Schools

**Fairmount Presbyterian Church**, on the southeast corner of Villard and 15th, was built in 1895 on land donated by George Miller. Miller used the church to attract potential buyers of Fairmount residential lots. Designed in the Georgian Revival style, it is the oldest existing church building in Eugene. A Sunday school was added to its eastern side in 1922. The building is now a Eugene City Landmark and is listed on the statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings.

Expansion of the University of Oregon campus reduced the size of the church's congregation, resulting in its closure in 1962. In the following year, the building was purchased by the

Maude I. Kerns Art Center. Kerns, an artist and educator, chaired the Art Education Department in the UO's School of Architecture and Allied Arts for 26 years. The art center continues to provide a gallery, studios, special exhibits, workshops, lectures, and classes. It has added space for shops, studios, and classrooms.

Members of **Fairmount Christian Church**, also referred to as Fairmount Church of Christ, dedicated its building on the corner of Columbia and 17th in April 1910. It was a two-story frame building with an octagonal rotunda and bay window wings. At the first baptism, the baptistry was filled with water that students had scooped from a ditch along 17th.

**Fairmount Christian School** also began in 1910, with classes possibly taking place in the church building. Construction of an educational unit east of the church was begun in 1947 but never completed. In 1954, the University of Oregon purchased the property, and the congregation moved to University Street Church of Christ, a new building at 29th and University. Fairmount Christian Church is gone, and the UO uses the educational building as a warehouse.



Fairmount Christian Church, formerly at Columbia Street and 17th. Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.

Following a successful petition by Fairmount neighbors for an eight-room elementary school, the original **Condon School** opened its doors in 1909. It was named in honor of Dr. Thomas Condon, a state geologist and the first science professor at the UO. Bonds in the amount of \$20,000 were issued for its construction on the corner of 15th and Moss. Very little in the way of books, supplies, or equipment were furnished, but Condon parents and friends worked hard for their school over the years, providing playground equipment, library books, magazines, and a piano. In 1921, the Condon PTA received its charter. Its first project was to install drinking fountains inside the building. It also sponsored Halloween parties, refurbished the faculty room, and purchased bats, a globe, a large dictionary, and phonograph records. Condon's PTA-sponsored kindergarten began in 1940.

In 1924, **Roosevelt Junior High School** opened at 1787 Agate Street to serve students in the Fairmount and South University neighborhoods. Condon students used its stage for their first major musical production in the 1930s. Roosevelt moved to its current location at 24th and Hilyard in 1949. Although the original Condon School was extensively remodeled in the mid-1940s to accommodate increasing enrollment, the building was razed in 1950, and children, furnishings, and supplies were all transferred to the remodeled Roosevelt building on Agate Street.

The new Condon Elementary School provided space for 14 classrooms, a multipurpose room, a visual-aids room, a library, and other facilities. The instructional program was improved. The gymnasium enabled more assemblies to be presented and folk dancing to be offered. Basketball became the major sport.

During the 1950s, Condon offered a special class for remedial readers as well as a special 6th grade class for gifted students. In 1974, a magnet arts alternative school moved from Edgewood to Condon, where space was available because enrollment in the attendance area had declined.

To foster children's imagination and promote their physical development, neighbors launched an effort in 1976 to replace Condon's traditional swing set and climbing bars with a new creative playground. A boat, dock, tower, bridge, and rope-climbing structure were installed, using no monetary support from the school district. However, individual and corporate donations, plus parent, neighbor, and service club work parties brought a heightened sense of community. The basalt rock fort in Agate Park is the only structure remaining from that effort.

The school board decided to close Condon/Magnet Arts in 1983 due to declining enrollment. The building was purchased by the University of Oregon and renamed Agate Hall.

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**CLYDE AND CARL LANEY:** *[The kids could walk to school] until about third or fourth grade. ... Mrs. Rocky and I, we had late bloomers ... and we used to put them on our bicycles and take them to school. ... All of [the schools] were within walking distance. The young girl who lived up here, she'd come and pick up my daughter ... you'd see a group of kids [walking] to Edison or to Roosevelt or South.*

**INGRID WEATHERHEAD:** *It was safe. We had no problem letting our children walk to school. Sometimes, if it was very slippery in winter, I would*

*take them in the car. The children didn't seem to mind [walking], because everyone else's children walked to school.*

**MAGGIE GONTRUM:** *[There used to be] a Spring Sing for Condon [School] at Washburne Park. They would roll an upright piano up the sidewalk from Condon School out into [the old] wading pool.*

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**THE GRASSHOPPER, TOLD BY MARGE RAMEY, ANITA JOHNSON, AND RAY SCOFIELD:** *The Grasshopper newspaper is one of the best things that ever happened in this neighborhood. Betty Jean Hulteng, wife of John Hulteng, Dean of Journalism, decided to do a neighborhood newspaper. One summer, the Hultengs arrived back from [Hayden Lake. Their kids and the Ramey children] were so excited about seeing each other. [They came to Marge's front door] and said, "We're going to do a newspaper." [About] an hour after that, BJ called and said, "Marge, we're going to do a newspaper in the neighborhood, and I've located an old mimeograph machine, and I wonder if you'll type the mimeograph stencils?"*

*The children would go to BJ's one afternoon a week. Everybody had a job. The littlest kid had a job. Everybody delivered, everybody wrote. BJ would interview the ones who couldn't write yet. They would have an assignment, and she would ask them leading questions and write down exactly what they said, in their language. Those who could write, we typed it just the way they wrote it, the spelling, the sentence phrasing. The kids would do their own illustrations.*

*We did it weekly for many, many years. [Children] in junior high could be editors, the managing editor, the sports editor, and all. They had quite a subscription list, [including mailings to relatives around the world]. After we ran it on the mimeograph, the kids would assemble the newsletters, and the little kids hand-colored many of them. Then the children would go out, along routes BJ had organized, and they'd hand-deliver to people, 10 cents a copy. It was absolutely a remarkable business.*

*[We wrote about] neighborhood happenings—anything in the neighborhood that was going on. A lot of the news articles were things about somebody's cat had kittens and that kind of stuff. But in addition, there was "we need a crosswalk and a stop sign." Parents would take kids to the president of the university, the mayor of the town, the governor, everywhere. The kids would interview them, plan the questions in advance, and then write up the interview. [One time], we arranged for 3 or 4 of the older children to go with us to a City Council meeting, [when the neighborhood was concerned about] the used-car dealership expanding down 15th. Then they wrote about the City Council meeting in The Grasshopper. We thought that was a good experience for them.*

*Anita Johnson remembers Steve Prefontaine coming to the basement of the Hulteng house and the kids interviewing him. He was such a neighborhood hero. Oh, the kids loved him. He ran in the neighborhood, and ran up the hill, and he always spoke to the kids. And the kids would always yell at him, "Are you going to win, Pre?" I remember they asked him [in the interview] ... "what do you eat for breakfast, Pre?" and he said, "Oh, oatmeal and toast." And then about half an hour later this little tiny kid said, "Pre, how do you spell oatmeal?"*

*At the end of the year in the spring, BJ had a little money left [from subscriptions]. We would have lunch*

*at The Palace Mandarin Chinese restaurant, down on 13th and Alder. ... That was great fun. [Later, as the number of Grasshopper alumni grew], there was a big Grasshopper picnic up in [Hendricks] park. [The Grasshopper was published for] 13 years. The last few years, it was at [Anita Johnson's] house ... and then Don Robinson [Register-Guard editor], he and I [Ray Scofield] would put it together. It was one of the best learning tools [for the kids] growing up.*

### GRASSHOPPER ARTICLES (from April 4, 1969 issue)

#### “Crash”

A brand new car crashed into Tiffs yesterday.

#### “Coberds are Bare” (Interview by Tim Kays, Scott Chambers, Bill Kleinsasser, and Randy Boldberg)

We went to the Lacys house. They had a fire in there house. The fire started at about 10 o'clock. A pan of grease spilled on the stove and cot on fire. The fire went into the coberds. And to firetrucks came. The smock went into the attack and all throught the house. Mrs. Lacy bernt her arm and a little of her hair.

#### “Tot Jots” by Andrea

I was a flower girl. I spreaded flower petals all over the church.

#### “Tortuga” by Tama Cuddeback

Tortuga is my turtle. I got him for free from my uncle and aunt during a swim-meet up in Portland. He's a nice thing. I just hope my dog doesn't kill him.

### “Census” by Pixi Olson

We have 4 cats 1 dog 2 rats and 3 other brother and sisters.

## The University and Fairmount

### INCEPTION ERA (1876–1913)

In 1872, the University of Oregon was established by an act of the Oregon State Legislature. The following year, 18 acres were purchased on the east side of Eugene, and campus construction began.



The doors of Deady Hall opened in the fall of 1876 for 155 students. It would be 10 years before Villard Hall provided more classrooms. By the end of the era, eight more acres had been added to the campus along with seven additional buildings.

### LAWRENCE/CUTHBERT ERA (1914–1946)

This era was one of great expansion for the University of Oregon, so the need for a campus planner and architect became evident. Ellis F. Lawrence was hired in 1914, and he designed virtually all of the buildings erected in this era. Toward the end of this expansion period, Frederick A. Cuthbert was hired to serve as the campus landscape architect. By 1919, the university had expanded to the west side of Agate Street with the erection of Hayward Field.



Campus maps for 1913, 1947, 1974 and 2008.

In 1944, student enrollment was 2,245. By the fall of 1946, it had nearly tripled, and more than half of the students were WWII veterans. The campus expanded immediately east of Agate Street into Fairmount with the erection of prefabricated buildings, which served as housing for married veterans. By the end of this era, the campus had grown to 100 acres.

### MID-CENTURY ERA (1947–1974)

During this era, with authorization from the University of Oregon administration and the State Board of Higher Education, the university expanded into the east campus area. The state-approved boundaries were extended from Agate Street to the west side of Villard Street and from 14th to about 18th.

The campus grew to 202 acres during this era, primarily through eastward expansion. One part

of the 202 acres was a 14-acre parcel north of Franklin Boulevard and east of Riverfront Parkway, on which the Riverfront Research Park is located.

### CURRENT CAMPUS (1975–PRESENT)

By the early 1980s, the university had purchased approximately 70 percent of the properties within the boundaries approved by the state three decades earlier and, by 2008, nearly 100 percent. Through collaboration among the university, City of Eugene, and the Fairmount Neighborhood Association, *The University of Oregon Development Policy East Campus Area* was adopted in 1982 and revised in 2003. This development policy has served as a guide for addressing concerns about the university's expansion within the state-approved boundaries.

Additionally, various properties fronting

Franklin Boulevard and within neighborhood boundaries came into university or UO Foundation ownership during this era, expanding the campus by almost 15 acres. Perhaps the most notable change in the Fairmount neighborhood during this period was the construction of the Matt Knight Arena. Over several years, neighbors worked with the city and the university to address concerns related to the new arena, such as event parking.

The Fairmount neighborhood enjoys numerous benefits of the eastward expansion. For example, sporting and cultural facilities, open spaces, and pedestrian-friendly places are easily accessible. At the same time, Fairmount suffers from “town-gown” conflicts typical to neighborhoods bordering a university, such as increased traffic, different expectations surrounding noise and partying, and some poorly maintained rental homes. Fortunately, an involved neighborhood association continues to work with the university and the city to balance the benefits and problems associated with university proximity.



Maps courtesy of the University of Oregon Heritage Landscape Plan, UO Campus Planning and Real Estate.

## Reminiscences

**DON HUNTER:** *[In the late 20s], I spent a lot of time at the Anchorage [Raceway Boat House at 997 Franklin] in the summer. [There was a] café and canoe house, swimming pool, diving tower. The diving tower you could go up, dive into the pool on one side or dive into the Millrace on the other side. And they had a set of rings you could go across.*

**MARVIN KRENK:** *[Mahlon and] Nina Sweet had a short wave radio on at all times, tuned to the aviation frequencies, in case [the pilots] were in trouble. There were no towers, no landing places.*

**GEORGE McCULLY:** *Mahlon Sweet lived just up the hill. As a kid growing up, whenever there was an airplane going over, we'd all go outside and look at the airplane. They'd fly over Mahlon Sweet's house. And the Sweets would come out and see who it was. Then they'd call up the family and tell them that they could go pick up so-and-so at the airport, [which] at that time was over on 18th at Westmoreland Park.*

**GEORGE McCULLY:** *Dad [and his buddies] had this deal on Thanksgiving, and I don't know where it was, but somebody had an outhouse, and they'd always get down and hide behind this hedge, and they'd watch, to see when the guy would leave the window, and then they'd go over and knock his outhouse over. So they did this for, I don't know, two or three years in a row. This was great sport. And so one night ... they were down by the hedge, and the guy just wouldn't leave the doggone window, and finally, he walked away from the window, and they all started running like mad to get to the outhouse. Well,*

*he had moved the outhouse over, and they all ended up in the pit. He came out and hauled them out. That was the last time ...*

**HATTIE MAE NIXON:** *We rented a little house down here, at 15th on the south side of Orchard. We went inside this farmhouse, went upstairs, and here was a table from one of the bedrooms that was holding up the ceiling down below. And I went up into the attic and I opened up the [crawl space] door, and it was all charred on the inside. One of the men in my folkdance group [when he found out where we were living] said, "Oh yes, I know that house. I grew up as a teenager right across the street from it. The last people that rented it—there were four or five men—they each had a car, and they all had California licenses on them. We all thought it was funny, you know, that a whole group of 'em would come up here to go to the university. ... Well, one night there was an explosion. I jumped out of bed and looked and I could see that there were flames up there. These men all rushed out and got into their cars and drove away. When the firemen came, [they found] a still upstairs."*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *We got to go to the football games as part of the Knothole Club. We actually had a card, and you paid 25 cents for the card, and that let you get into a special nosebleed section in the end zone and watch the game. All of us kids would get in there, and try to sneak in or peak into the fence, and I think it was like peeking through a knothole, and that's why they called it the Knothole Club.*

**MIR STARLIN:** *It was easier, in my period, wives were not expected to work ... there weren't jobs for us in the first place ... the Fairmount neighbors were so close to the university, we could walk to lectures. And the Civic Music Association was started at the*

*university and played in Mac Court. Some big traveling bands and orchestras and things like that would come to Mac Court. And, of course, we were so close to the track field. Football was played there too. You could go to the track meet, for example, and they had a Knothole Club, which they let little kids get in for 25 cents.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *In the summertime, the neighborhood used to get together, and us kids used to go to Safeway [1840 E. 13th], when the watermelon truck would show up, and we would help unload the watermelons. And they would come up there, and guide you up on the truck, and you'd throw them out, and another guy would catch them, and then they'd put them in a shopping cart, and we'd wheel the shopping cart in and unload them on a conveyor belt that took them down to the basement, and they'd put them away down there somewhere. Anyway, all of the watermelons that were cracked, they gave us, and we would come home with a shopping cart full of watermelons, and the whole neighborhood would come together and eat watermelon. No fixed date, because it was when the watermelon truck delivered. It was a neat deal.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *I think one of the big draws, especially when we lived down in the 1400 block of Moss Street ... was Williams Bakery, [which] had—this will sound funny—had the best sidewalks. ... Our sidewalks were all rough and had little ridges in them, so when you did your [roller] skating, they vibrated you—they tingled your feet. Williams Bakery had these wonderful, flat sidewalks, where all us kids would go down and go roller-skating, and play. ... We would go down and play at Williams Bakery, and we got to know the people who worked there. And so, we would roller skate around to the finished end, where they'd load up the trucks, and*

*where they'd package the bread, and every now and then the packaging machine would screw up, and they'd give us extra pieces of bread. So, they'd give us this bread, and we'd skate back around to the other end, where they'd mix the ingredients—I still to this day remember his name was Bill—and we would go in there, and Bill would give us brown sugar and raisins, and we'd make a brown sugar and raisin sandwich, and we'd come home with this sugar high, and Mom could never understand why we weren't hungry. That was almost a ritual.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *The science lab at the university would give all of us kids free guinea pigs after they were done using them, much to our parents' dislike. So [we] used to go down to the Eugene Pet Corral and try and give our guinea pigs away. I remember that's how my brother John and I got a dog ... if we gave away ... every single last guinea pig, we could have a dog. You would just almost get them all given away, and there would be another batch. I'm sure someone up at the science lab is still laughing about it.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *We would get all kinds of things, we would make all kinds of concoctions; I mean, you think about it now ... none of us got really hurt too bad. I remember Eugene Chen—his dad was a professor at the university—had a black powder cannon that they had brought over from China with them when they came...to Eugene. He had this cannon that we would go out and play with in the yard, and we'd put the stuff in there, and we got the stuff up at the science lab. We all have our fingers still.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *We did go in the tunnels. That was another place we weren't supposed to go to. They were the steam tunnels, up at the university.*

*And they had a lot of snakes and stuff in them. But that was cool. You could go in the steam tunnels and come up in the dorms. You could go and wrap around and actually come up in the library. And it was really kind of neat, because you could go along, and you could see light where there would be another grate, and you'd open it up, and back in those days, the grates all opened up—they never kept them locked.*

**GEORGE McCULLY:** *We played football in the street; we played baseball down at old Condon; we'd go out to Fairmount Park. It seems odd to me today that kids don't have the same kind of luxury of being able to run around. When it was time to come home, there was a whistle that my parents had—it was two longs and two shorts. That was the call. And when Mom whistled, we knew that we had 5 or 10 minutes, and when Dad whistled, we knew we'd better come home.*

**CLAY AND SCOTT STARLIN:** *Dad was so talented to be able to make a real loud whistle and that meant it was dinner time and time to call the game off.*

**GEORGE CURRIN:** *Our parents had a bell they would ring, like an old school bell. ... All the parents had some different deal so that we could hear it. ... If you ever heard your dad yelling at the top of his voice, you knew that you'd missed the bell.*

**DON HUNTER:** *One day, my brother and I were playing in the backyard in our sandbox and mother brought us some big, delicious plums to eat. They were so good. When we finished them, I wondered if I could plant the pits. So I got some cups, planted 6 seeds, and set them all in a row. Only one seed survived, and we planted that tree. As a sapling, it*

*lost its top when a neighbor boy needed leaves for his butterfly [caterpillar]. When Sacred Heart bought that house to build the hospital, we moved to Villard St. One day, I was riding my bike by the old house and the tree had been bulldozed. I rode home, and got my dad with his truck. We picked up the tree, brought it home, and replanted it. It survived again. Eventually, I planted it on the hill where we later built my [current] house. The tree has since died, but it produced many seedlings that I planted in my yard and in other yards in the neighborhood.*

**STAN AND JOAN COOK (SC), AND NEIGHBOR DORIS BURKLAND (DB):** *Some of the earliest pets we had were the ducks that grew up from Easter ducklings. The ducks waddled around and pooped in the [neighbors'] yard. ... They let us know that they really didn't like the duck [droppings]. One neighbor did object to our kids at one point. ... Our kids and the Platt kids used to play in her orchard. During the go-cart years, the go-cart was fairly annoying. DB: I remember the go-cart years ... and the ferret years ... we had the ferret on our side, when the ferret would get out periodically. SC: Erick had an old car; he was the mechanic who became the electronic engineer. In the era when he had an old car, there was a swarm of teenage boys around him while he worked on the old car in the garage—practically in [the neighbors'] front yard just across the narrow street. I have a hunch that partly drove [them] away; they moved away. DB: That's what goes into raising kids, all of those kinds of things.*

## Conclusion

Fairmount contains the roots of many elements that could contribute to an even better future for our neighborhood: a visionary, if somewhat unrealized, beginning; gracious housing stock, beloved local institutions, and a thoughtfully platted layout; established street trees, abundant gardens, and well-loved parks; a history of numerous corner stores, local production of everything from boats to bakery items, and a half-century of ice cream parlors; and a history of growing alongside a vibrant university. However, even more important than our neighborhood's natural and built environment is our history as a close-knit group of creative, engaged people who are raising families, studying at the university, building careers and community, enjoying retirement, or maybe even inventing flying machines. Our hope is that the stories that we have uncovered through archival research and oral histories will provide inspiration for the future.

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**MAGGIE GONTRUM:** *I still have hope that we can preserve some of this [neighborhood]. I hope that the density is going to work in our favor. I like the idea [of] having neighborhoods where you can walk to places, and managing density is terribly important. ... It might be nice if we can all walk to someplace to shop and meet each other along the way and stop by the park while we're shopping and ... so, you know, I have hope.*

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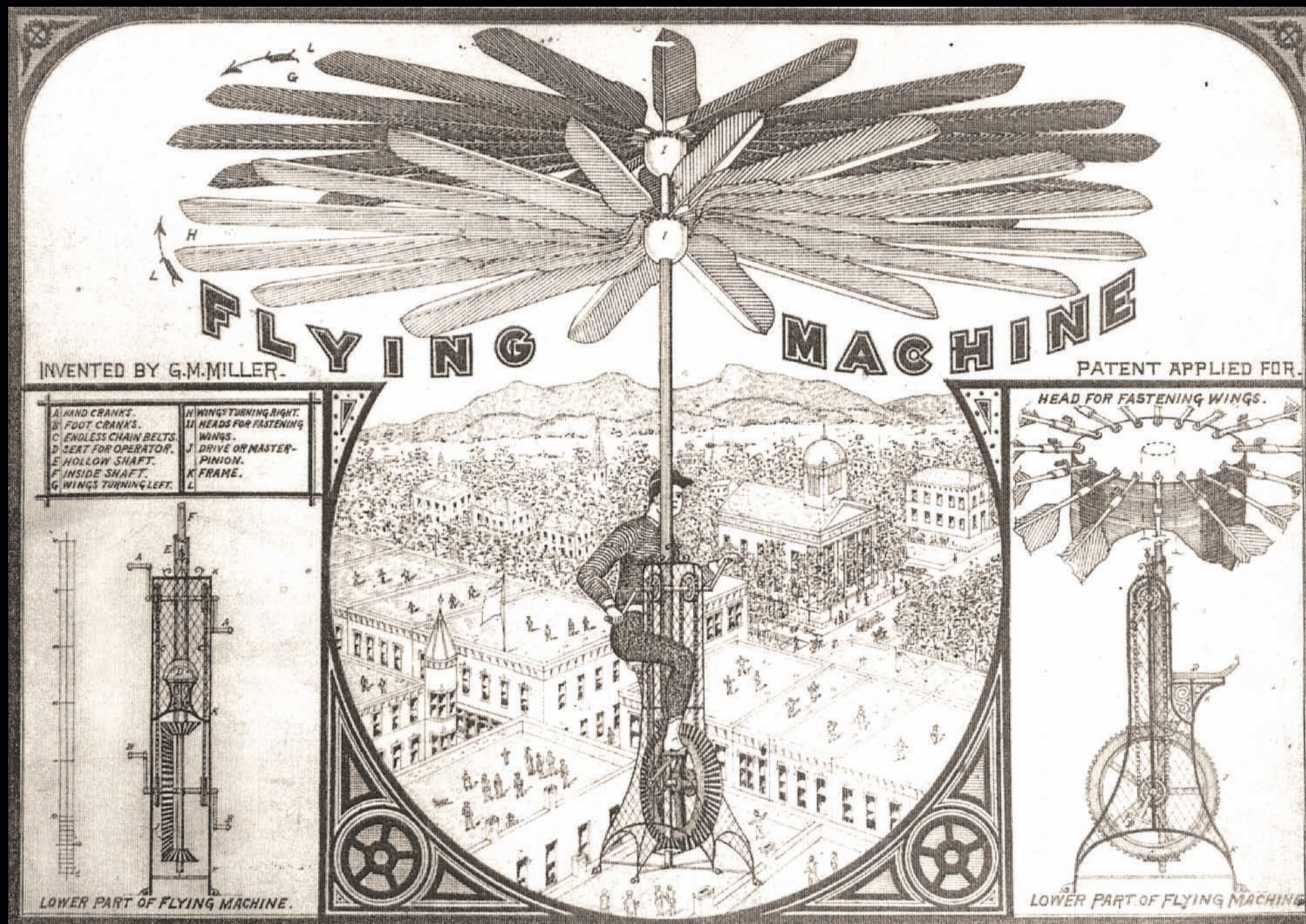
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George Miller's flying machine, another one of Miller's imaginative inventions. Miller patented the machine in 1892, two years after he founded the town of Fairmount, Oregon. *Courtesy of the Lane County Historical Museum.*