

A rhythm of beginnings and endings, old and new, water and land, river travel, railroads and interstate highway development are all key historical themes that have shaped this property and the surrounding community of Wilsonville.

Today, McMenamins invites you to enjoy and experience the old and new and rhythm inherent in this site—a newly built restaurant crafted from new and old pieces to form what looks like a 100-year-old hop barn, and an historic, 1911 church reinvigorated by some artful additions, not to mention a complete basement brewery! Linking the old and new is a grassy amphitheater, ideal for quiet conversations and rollicking music performances.

Grab a pint of Bill Flynn's Gold, named for a legendary, local publican, and explore the art, architecture and history that reflects the personalities and events that have defined this property and its surroundings over the past couple centuries.

The simple, but graceful church, which literally celebrates its centennial during the same month of its opening as part of the new McMenamins' location, was completed in August 1911 by the Wilsonville Methodist Society. It's just like poetry to learn that its first minister, John W. Exon, had formerly been (and would be again) a respected riverboat captain, whose career had taken him on many journeys up and down the Willamette River, with regular stops at Wilsonville.

At the time of its construction, the church stood at the north end of the original village,



and about a half mile from the Willamette River, where a ferry had been making crossings for the previous 64 years. The street leading by the church, bisecting the small commercial center to the ferry was Wilsonville's main drag, Boones Ferry Road. The road followed the same route of an ancient Native American

trail leading up the Willamette Valley.

The namesake of the road and ferry was the Boone family. Patriarch, Alphonso Boone was grandson of, yes, the famous American frontiersman Daniel Boone (as well as cousin to John Daniel Boon, who had chosen to drop the final "e" in the family name—builder of McMenamins Boon's Treasury in Salem). Alphonso had settled this area in

1846, recognizing the great business opportunity of establishing a regular ferry service at the narrow point in the river where the well-worn trail crossed. Native Americans, who had a centuries-long tradition of crossings here, were said to have helped ferry Boone's earliest patrons via their canoes.

Well into the automobile age, Boones Ferry remained a vital link in this key route between Portland and Salem. And while the Boone name persevered in connection with both the ferry crossing and the thoroughfare, by the late 1800s, the riverfront

community known to that point as Boone's Ferry or Boone's Landing, became known as Wilsonville, named for Charles Wilson. Wilson, a native of Denmark, came to the area after a lengthy time in Minnesota, where he had enjoyed a prosperous career as a merchant,



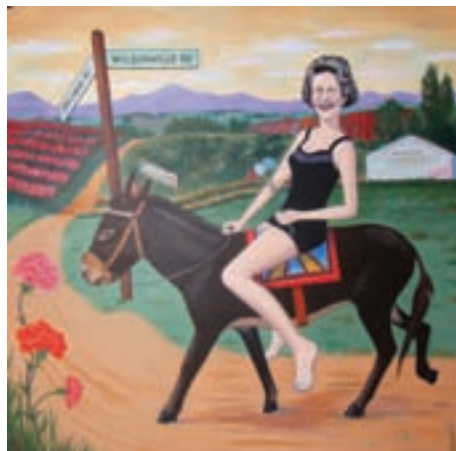


river pilot, brewery owner and saloon man. He brought this experience to Boone's Landing, purchased several properties, including part of the Boone acreage, and established a post office in 1876 and the community's first general store the next year. Wilson also made plans to plat the township of Wilsonville, but that would be delayed for a couple decades.

Soon after the turn of the century, news that the Oregon Electric Railway would be built south from Portland to Eugene via Wilsonville, and would feature a great bridge over the Willamette at the edge of town, was met with much local excitement and activity. Almost overnight, a hotel, saloon and bank went up to serve the railroad builders, passengers, and anticipated additions to the population.

The railroad's decision to locate its depot about a half-mile north of Wilsonville's cluster of business at the riverfront, prompted a shift of the community's commercial center. Buildings were moved and new ones raised along Boones Ferry Road, opposite the depot, the new community hub.

This boom went bust during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The railroad terminated its passenger service, the bank went belly up, and times were tough. But the river still flowed, the ferry made its crossings, and farmers raised their crops and



sought whatever profits they could.

In the 1950s, change again came to Wilsonville and hit the community hard. Bulldozers and road graders knocked on Wilsonville's door, bringing with them the latest in transportation technology: the Interstate. What was lauded as a great harbinger of civic improvement initially looked like it was going to kill the town.

The construction of I-5 and the associated Boone Bridge over the Willamette brought an end to the ferry service in 1954, after 107 years. It also effectively re-routed traffic from the toodling stream that had flowed through town (where merchants made their livelihoods from the "stop-offs" often caused by ferry-crossing back-ups), to a 60-MPH non-stop torrent that bypassed the community altogether.

Eventually Wilsonville recovered and thrived because of the interstate. Families desiring a more rural setting settled here and commuted to work in Portland. Meanwhile, the community relocated its town center one more time to create a new, more automobile-friendly site on the east line of the freeway, on what had been farmland.

The old Methodist Church, too, endured change. The original occupants moved to a new site in 1992, and after a few years with a different congregation, the church was vacated and sold to the Fred Meyer company. Thanks to local preservation efforts, the building was saved, allowing for McMenamins' renovation.

In each of the historic photos and painted panels around the property, you'll find depictions of these events and the people associated with them, from Rev. Exon (above) to Maurine Neuberger (below), a local girl who became the U. S. Senator from Oregon during the 1960s.

Walt Morey, author of *Gentle Ben*, was another notable and beloved resident here.