



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
July 20, 2010

Contact: Bonnie Hirshberger, Citizen Information Specialist
503-675-3992

Lake Oswego Celebrates “The Furnace Blast”

LAKE OSWEGO – On Saturday, July 24, the City of Lake Oswego will celebrate the completion of preservation work on one of Oregon’s oldest landmarks, the stone blast furnace built by the Oregon Iron Company in 1866. The community celebration, dubbed “The Furnace Blast,” will feature music, refreshments, exhibits, furnace tours, and a blacksmith demonstration. Festivities, which are free, will begin at 10 a.m. in George Rogers Park.

The garden surrounding the furnace will be dedicated to the memory of former Lake Oswego mayor Bill Gerber, who died in 2005. Gerber was a noted nurseryman and the garden features a grove of large Strawberry Madrone Trees (*Arbutus unedo*) that he admired.

An interpretive kiosk beside the furnace will explain the role of the furnace in Oswego’s early iron industry. The kiosk signs were paid for with funds from The Friends of Judie Hammerstad. The furnace project was approved when Hammerstad was mayor of Lake Oswego.

The Oswego Iron Furnace is one of Oregon’s oldest landmarks and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was the first iron furnace on the Pacific Coast and is the only surviving historic furnace west of the Rocky Mountains. Between 1867 and 1885 it supplied pig iron to foundries from Portland to San Francisco.

Planning for the project began in 2004. A federal Save America’s Treasures Grant paid for archaeology and the development of plans and specifications. The project engineer was Thomas E. Fowler of Miller Consulting Engineers. Pioneer Waterproofing Company Inc. was responsible for carrying out the restoration work, which was completed in twelve months. The work was funded by an increase in the City’s Transient Lodging Tax.

For more information, please contact Jamie Inglis at 503-675-3985.

###

