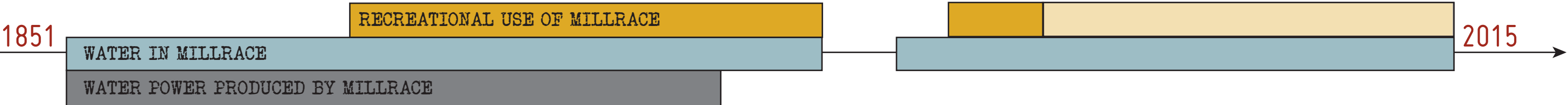


HISTORY OF THE
MILLRACE

EUGENE, OR

PRESENTATION BY CHRISTY PRATT

ALTHOUGH THE MILLRACE HAS BEEN NEGLECTED IN RECENT YEARS, IT WAS HISTORICALLY THE CENTER OF EUGENE'S INDUSTRIAL BEGINNINGS, AS WELL AS AN ACTIVE PLACE OF RECREATION.



c. 1900



<http://lanecounty.pastperfect-online.com/33692cgi/mweb.exe?request=ks>

1851

MILLRACE COMPLETED

Hilyard Shaw and Avery A. Smith excavate a ditch approximately five blocks long from Ferry Street to Kincaid Street that connects the two sloughs, creating a millrace that can be used to produce power to the surrounding mills.

prior to 1851

Millrace was originally composed of two sloughs (old river bed scars). It was primarily vegetated by riparian growth, including poplars, maples, willows, alders, and oaks.

1850

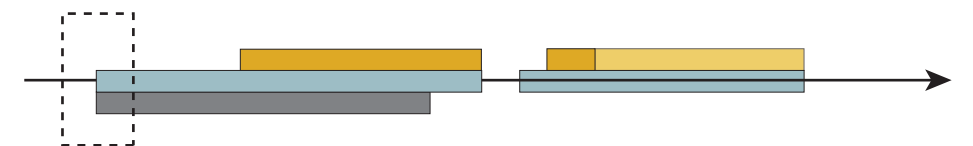
1860

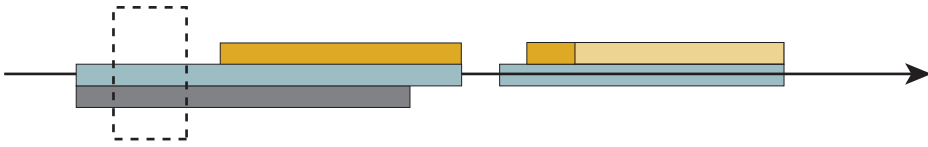
1852

Shaw builds a sawmill on the banks of the lower Millrace.

1856

Flourmill completed.





1876

**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
OPENS**

Eugene's population continues to increase.

1870

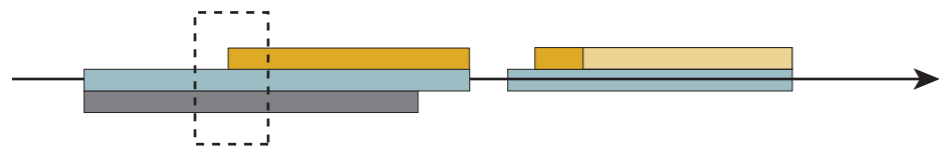
1871

RAILROAD COMES TO EUGENE

The railroad connects Eugene to other towns and cities. The population of Eugene increases dramatically.

c. 1912





c. 1950



Lane County Historical Museum

<http://lanecounty.pastperfect-online.com/33692cgi/mweb.exe?request=ks>

1880

1884

ICE SKATING ON THE MILLRACE!

The Millrace freezes over and is used for ice skating by townspeople and University students. This is one of the first times the Millrace is used recreationally.

1890

MCCLANAHAN'S BOATHOUSE OPENS

Located at Ferry Street, McClanahan's Boathouse is the first boat rental. Skiffing in the Millrace becomes a popular recreational activity.

1890

1877 - 1898

MILLRACE IS THE INDUSTRIAL CENTER OF EUGENE

Millrace used primarily as a power source for the mills located on its bank. Secondly, it was used by farmers to transport produce to the market in the city center.

1890's

Chambers Power Company develops Millrace as a self-supporting power source. Additional tail races are built to accommodate increasing industrial demand. A wing dam into the river is built to divert river's flow into the Millrace. The Millrace channel is deepened and widened extensively.

early 1900's

**BEGINNING OF CANOE
FETE TRADITION**

Canoe Fete becomes popular
University tradition, consisting of
swimming races and nighttime
parades with decorated canoes.

1900

1906

**CHAMBERS OPENS
BOATHOUSE**

Recreational use
continues to increase.

MCCLANAHAN'S BOATHOUSE; DATE UNKNOWN.



https://www.flickr.com/photos/uo_libraries/3632368401/

1910

DATE UNKNOWN



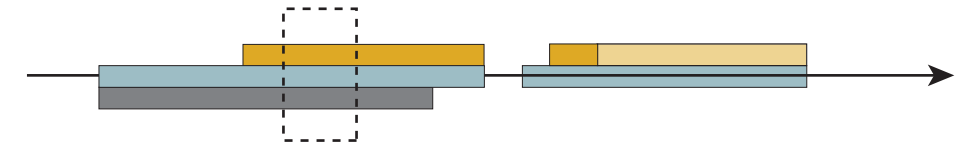
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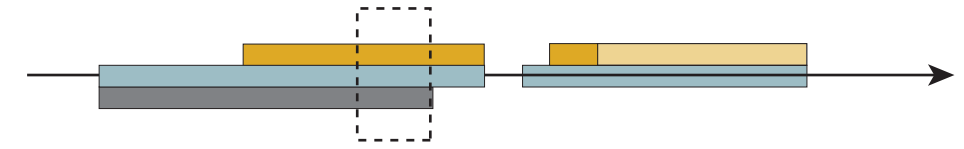
**INCREASE IN RESIDENTIAL
HOUSING NEAR THE
MILLRACE**

Residents enjoyed the recreational
uses of the Millrace but they were
against increased industrial use of
the Millrace for power.

1911

**"ANCHORAGE"
BOATHOUSE OPENS**





1916

**LEGAL ISSUES STALL
MILLRACE DEVELOPMENT**

Residents near the Millrace petitioned the US Engineering Department to destroy wing dam which raised water level and caused flooding in their basements. The case was brought to Supreme Court. Although the residents didn't win, limits were set on the conditions of the Millrace

1920

c. 1915



1928

**ALL WATERWHEELS ALONG RACE
ARE STOPPED**

Water power practices become obsolete with the advancement of other technologies. Most industries switch to electricity as a more reliable power source. This, along with a flood that breaches the Millrace's intake channel, lead to the discontiation of the Millrace as a water power source.

1900's

Plans to enhance Canoe Fete event included outdoor amphitheater, extended park lands and relocation of railroad tracks and Franklin Blvd. The University buys property north of Millrace with intention of implementing these plans.

Plans are abandoned with onset of WWII.

1940's

CANOE FETE STOPS

Canoe Fete stops after series of floods destroy intake channel and diversion dam, leaving Millrace dry.

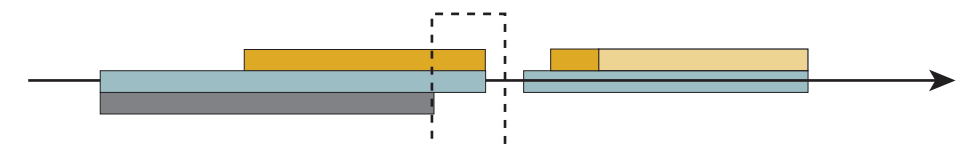
1945

CANOE FETE REVIVED (ON LAND)

WWII ends and the millrace is still dry, but the Canoe Fete is revived as a float parade on wheels down the city streets.

1930

1940



1950's

- WATER LEVELS OF MILLRACE VARY
- ENTIRE SOUTH BANK OF MILLRACE BECOME GREEN LAWNS

1949 MILLRACE REFILLED

1950

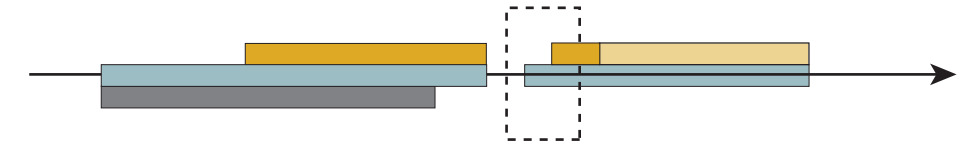
All industries that had originally used the Millrace for power are gone.

1947 CITY OF EUGENE BUYS MILLRACE

1955

RECREATION INCREASES

Pumps are installed to increase flow of the race. A bridge is installed at Alder Street instead of a culvert so the lower Millrace can remain open to canoeists. The Canoe Fete is revived in the Millrace.



1960

1957

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON OBTAINS WATER RIGHTS

Rights to use water from the Willamette River:

- 36.8 cubic feet per second, for the purpose of recreation, including swimming, boating, and scenic enhancement.
- 13.2 cubic feet per second for purpose of condenser cooling in University heating plant.

City repairs intake channel and refills Millrace, but it is described as “little more than a half-filled muddy slough clogged with debris.” (Eugene Register-Guard, 9/17/52)

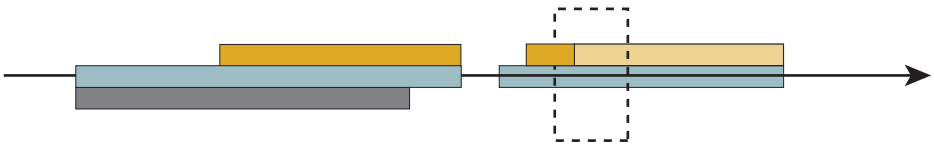
late 1960's
RECREATION
DECREASES

During time of Vietnam War, recreational activities such as Canoe Fetes are abandoned.

1965 CANOE FETE



<http://lanecounty.pastperfect-online.com/33692cgi/mweb.exe?request=ks>



1974
MILLRACE IN POOR
CONDITION

Millrace is identified as the most unsanitary place to swim in Lane County. Redevelopment of UO duck pond begins.

1970

1980

JAN 1972



http://oregondigital.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/archpnw&CISOPTR=13595&CISOBX=1&REC=14

early 1970's
COMMUNITY GETS INVOLVED IN
REVITALIZING MILLRACE

A student group, Millrace Volunteers, initiates yearly program to clean the Millrace and study ways to improve water quality.

The Emerald Waterways Citizens' Committee, Inc. proposes to revitalize Millrace through open channel system linking Millrace to Amazon Creek.

SEPT 1980



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1996

“THE EMERALD CANAL”

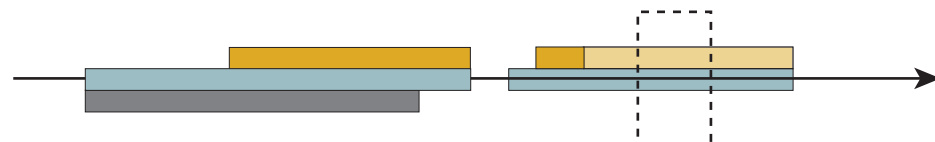
Supporters of Millrace revitalization again propose to connect lower millrace from 10th Avenue and Mill Street to Amazon Creek near 17th Avenue to create “The Emerald Canal.” The canal would feature waterfront shops, restaurants and apartments. The cost of the project was estimated at \$35 million, and was never actualized.

1990

SIGMA NU FRATERNITY HOUSE; MARCH 1990

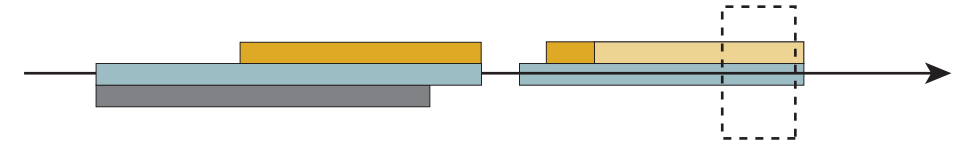


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2000's

ONGOING DEBATES ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE MILLRACE...



2003

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON STOPS PUMPING
MILLRACE FULL-TIME.

2000

2010

2003

MILLRACE IS DETERMINED NATIONAL
REGISTER ELIGIBLE

Archeological investigations undergone to determine historically significant remnants of the Millrace.

2015 (PRESENT)

FUTURE OF MILLRACE IS STILL UNKNOWN.

2020

WHAT'S MISSING
FROM THIS HISTORY?

HOW AND WHEN DID THE MILLRACE
TRANSITION FROM BEING SOLEY A
MILLRACE TO BEING A STORM SEWER???

