

# The Environmental Movement, World War II, and the Millrace

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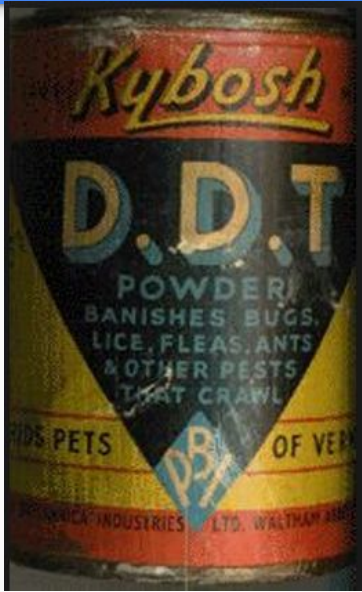
# History of the Millrace

- Hilyard Shaw at Judkin's point
- Industrialization on banks by 1856, railroad in 1871, UO in 1876
- Cold winter froze it over in 1886, beginning of recreation
- In 1940s, diversion dams broke, drying up the Millrace
- 1950s brought some hope but nothing came of the efforts



Eugene Mill Company. [Circa 1880], Illustrated History of Lane County, Oregon.

# Historical Environmental Movements



Left: Can of DDT Insecticide. [Circa 1950].

Right: Book Cover of Silent Spring by Rachel Carson. [Circa 1962], BirdNote.

- More of a conservation movement
- General public not aware of the environment, let wished to protect it
- *Silent Springs* by Rachel Carson opened many people's eyes
- That started the EDF which legalized and popularized the issue so more people wanted to get involved, bringing us into the 60s and 70s

# World War II

- Because of the GI Bill, veterans and their families flooded Eugene to get an education, population increased by 72 percent (Eugene Modernism)
- Post-War consumption was astronomical, lead to huge pollution problems by the 1950s
- Consumption signified a change in mindset about income, recreation, and nature
- With this awareness, students and citizens of Eugene alike had newly sparked interest in revitalizing the Millrace

# Millrace in 1950s

“Chances look good for an eventual restoration, better than they have since the abandonment of the ‘Race. Spurred by the Canoe Fete, the committee realizes that it can and must get action- that no amount of talk and study will accomplish what action will,” (*Daily Emerald*, 1955).

“the negotiations between the University and the city should result in a workable, binding contract between the two parties for maintenance of the stream,” (*Daily Emerald*, 1956).



(Register-Guar

Both images were published in the *Register Guard*.

**Above:** 1970

**Right:** 1968



## Millrace gets cleaning—litter goes where it belongs

DATE: 1970, *Register Guard*

**THE CLEANING OF THE MILLRACE** continued Saturday with "the biggest group yet" working to clear the stream. About 55 workers showed up and manned canoes and trucks to help haul debris from the Millrace. The Physical Plant has been providing tools and a dump truck for work crews which have been working since fall term when the Outdoor Program started the project. Most of the workers Saturday and last Thursday were students in the University's "Can Man Survive?" class.

DATE: 1970, *Daily Emerald*



# Environmental Activism in Eugene

- Eugene is seen today as a powerhouse in environmental action
- Student activism started with protests against the Vietnam War (OSPIRG)
- Eugene was getting dirtier with the growing population and industrialization
- Something needed to be done which coincided with the first global Earth Day in 1970

**EPA says Eugene above pollution limits**

*Register Guard, 1978*

**Eugenean cites goals of environmental council**

*Register Guard, 1970*





Left: *Register Guard*, 1970 (Amazon Creek)

Above: *Register Guard*, 1970 (Dump site in Eugene)

**Oil appetite must shrink**

*Register Guard, 1969*

**Activism lauded  
by UO speaker**

*Register Guard, 1972*

**Earth Day speakers  
urge fight for quality**

*Daily Emerald, 1970*

**Earth Day effects to linger?**

*Daily Emerald, 1970*

**Mac Court audience hears trio decry environmental ills**

*Daily Emerald, 1970*

# Today's Millrace

- Today, the Millrace is still dirty
- People became so focused on the larger movement that they forgot about the local issue
- Protecting the environment can be very overwhelming
- Today, there is a lot to do with regards to the environment but it is not too late to do something about the Millrace