

Chinese American Equal Suffrage Society

Address: 700 SW 6th Ave (Currently Pioneer Courthouse)

Where the Pioneer Courthouse now stands used to be the location of the Portland Hotel, which was open from 1890 – 1951. On April 11, 1912, the Portland Hotel hosted a banquet of 150 women fighting for women’s suffrage (women’s right to vote). But what made it unique was that a group of Chinese women was invited to share the stage as equals. At the time, this was almost unheard of. The women’s suffrage movement unfortunately did not always fight for the right of women of color, the movement fought mostly for the right of white women to vote. However, Portland was the home to a strong Chinese women’s suffrage fighter named Mrs. S.K. Chan, who founded the Chinese American Equal Suffrage Society spoke at the banquet at the Portland Hotel.

Mrs. S.K. Chan reminded everyone that the fight for women’s rights is a goal shared by women across racial and national boundaries. At the time, Chinese people were not even allowed to become citizens of the United States under the Chinese Exclusion Act. Unfortunately, there were many white women who were ready to throw women of color under the bus to win rights for themselves. So, while white Oregon women won the right to vote in 1912, Oregon did not allow Chinese people to vote until 1927.



Occupy ICE

Address: 4310 S Macadam Ave

[Warning: this is an active ICE building. Assess your own comfort and risks if you plan to go here in person]

The Macadam ICE building was the location of a month-long occupation called Occupy ICE in 2018. ICE stands for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the agency that enforces immigration laws. In 2018, President Trump announced his “Zero Tolerance” immigration policy. This policy led to immigrant children being separated from their families, and asylum seekers who were trying to escape from violence being turned away. Portland wanted to send a strong message that they did not support Trump’s anti-immigrant policies, and that ICE should be abolished!

Occupy ICE started on June 17, 2018 when hundreds of people showed up at the Macadam ICE building for a rally and a 24 hour vigil. The protest grew into a camp with hundreds of people each day and night. It became a community with a kitchen, free food, supplies, childcare, and health care services all donated by community members who supported the cause of abolishing ICE. The camp lasted until July 25, and inspired similar protests in cities across the United States, including New York, San Francisco, Atlanta, and more!



Bonneville Occupation

Address: 905 NE 11th Ave

The Bonneville Power Administration is a federal agency that oversees energy created through dams in the Pacific Northwest. But in 1975, the building became the site of famous direct action by the American Indian Movement! On August 15th, 1975, over 100 Native American protesters took over the Bonneville Power Administration building to protest government repression of the American Indian Movement. Specifically they were protesting the murder of Joseph Stuntz.

The American Indian Movement was founded in 1968 in Minnesota to address issues of police brutality, poverty, and discrimination against Native Americans. In the 1960's and 1970's, they used the tactics of civil disobedience and occupations to raise awareness for their cause. One of their most famous actions was occupying Alcatraz Island near San Francisco, which they occupied for more than 19 months! Joseph Stuntz was an activist murdered by federal agents at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. In response, Native American organizers in the Pacific Northwest organized a 6 day march from Olympia, Washington, to Portland. When they got to Portland, they occupied the Bonneville Power Administration Building to demand justice for Joseph Stuntz and an end to federal repression of Native Americans.

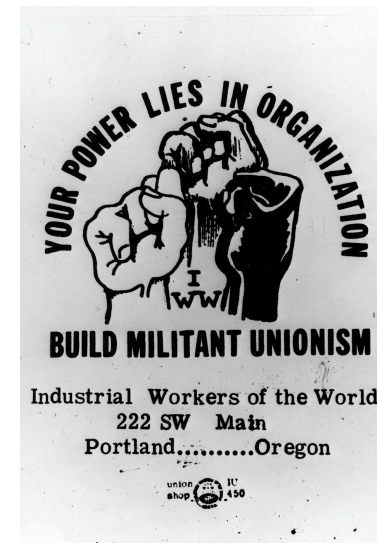


IWW Hangout

Address: 221 W Burnside

221 W. Burnside was the location of a famous clock shop in the early 1900's. This clock shop was owned by Thomas Burns, one of the founding members of the Portland chapter of the International Workers of the World (the IWW). The IWW is one of the most politically radical unions. A union is an organization that fights for the rights of workers. The IWW believes in direct action and worker power, and they are against capitalism.

Thomas Burns' clock shop was the main hangout for IWW members and radical Portlanders in the early 1920's. He organized a lending library out of his basement, where people could borrow books and supplies they needed for organizing. He would also host discussions between visiting radicals from across the United States, and offered up his floor to any worker who needed a place to sleep. During this time the IWW organized some of its most famous direct actions, including a strike at the Eastern and Western Lumber Mill, the Oregon Packing Company strike, and the Free Speech Fights, where IWW members marched and shut down the Morrison Bridge to fight for their right to speak about workers rights in public.



Historic Albina

Address: 2949 N Williams Avenue

For many decades the Albina community has been a hub for Portland's Black community. Discrimination limited Black workers to jobs like the railroad and shipbuilding industries in North and Northeast Portland, and racist red-lining policies limited their access to housing in other neighborhoods. Black-owned shops, clubs, churches, and other cultural centers sprang up to serve the community. But in the 1960s urban "revitalization" projects like the construction of the Memorial Coliseum, I-5, and Emmanuel Hospital destroyed many sections of an already vibrant black neighborhood.

Now as new, mostly white-owned, businesses and investment moves to the area, many Black Portlanders are calling out the continuing cycle of disinvestment, gentrification, and displacement. One result of this has been the Historic Black Williams Project, an art walk made by Cleo Davis and Kayin Talton Davis. 30 mounted signs and 10 sidewalk tiles line Williams Avenue from NE Broadway to N Killingsworth that tell the stories of Black residents of Williams Avenue from past to present.



Japanese Internment at Portland Expo Center

Address: 1930 N Expo Road

In February 1942 President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing the forced removal of citizens of Japanese ancestry from the "military area" of the West Coast. 3,700 Japanese-Americans in Oregon and SW Washington were forced to surrender themselves at the Portland Expo Center. At the time the building was a livestock exhibition hall, and families were housed in livestock stalls until eventually being moved to internment camps in Idaho or Wyoming for the rest of World War II.

After being released from imprisonment many Japanese Americans struggled to rebuild their lives after having their homes, businesses, and farmland taken over. In the decades since many survivors continue to speak out against the racist targeting of Japanese-Americans, and similar threats to Muslims, Arabs, and other immigrants after 9/11 and Trump's election. Today at the Portland Expo Center's MAX stop, Valerie Otani's artwork Voices of Remembrance is a memorial to those held at the Expo Center. Traditional Japanese timber gates are covered with silver internee ID tags, and maps and news articles from the time cover the steel legs.



Vanport Flood

Address: 1809 N Broadacre Road

In 1942 Vanport, the second-largest city in Oregon was founded to house the thousands of shipyard workers coming to the region during World War II. It was the largest public housing project in the United States, and with 10,000 Black residents it was also one of the most racially integrated communities in Oregon. Vanport had shopping centers, a 750-seat movie theater, a 150-bed hospital, schools, and nurseries that provided twenty-four-hour care for the children of working parents. As World War II ended and other workers moved away, many Black residents stayed in Vanport, unable to find housing in highly-segregated Portland.

On Memorial Day in 1948, during a heavy flooding on the Columbia River, Vanport residents woke up to an announcement from city officials: "Remember: Dikes are safe at present. You will be warned if necessary. You will have time to leave. Don't get excited." By that evening the dikes holding back the Columbia River broke and 10-feet of water flooded the town. 18,000 people were left homeless and the Black community rallied around the flood victims and drew attention to the racism that led to the creation and destruction of Vanport. Today a historical marker sits at the former site of Vanport, but its story continues to shape the struggle against racism in Oregon.



Black Panther Party's Fred Hampton Memorial People's Health Clinic

Address: 109 N Russell Street (Building is now gone.)

The Black Panthers were founded in 1966 in Oakland, CA as a response to racism and police violence against Black people. Soon, many chapters of the Black Panther Party existed all over the country, including Portland. They had a ten-point platform that called for equality in employment, housing, education, and ending police brutality, among other things.

In Portland, they started a Children's Breakfast Program at Highland United Church of Christ, feeding up to 125 children each morning before school! Did you know that the reason that public schools all over the country have breakfast programs is because of the Black Panthers? They also started a free health clinic, which gave free medical care five nights a week to people of any race, named the Fred Hampton Memorial People's Health Clinic. It was named after Fred Hampton, who was one of the founders of the Black Panther Party. He was murdered by Chicago police in a plan from the FBI, who thought the Black Panthers were a threat to national security. The clinic building was demolished because of gentrification, but it moved around and stayed open until 1979. The Portland chapter of the Black Panther Party was active for 10 years.



Plaza Blocks

Address: Between SW Salmon St, SW 4th Ave, SW Madison St, and SW 3rd Ave

[Warning: there are active protests happening daily. Assess your own comfort and risks if you plan to go here in person]

Portland has a rich history of protest and movements for justice. The Plaza Blocks are downtown, and include Chapman Square and Lownsdale Square. This area has become a major site of protest through the years for Portlanders, most recently in the Black Lives Matter movement and in the protests that began after the murder of George Floyd by police officers in May. The Plaza Blocks face the Federal Courthouse and the Multnomah County Justice Center, and protests have continued there every night since the protests began on May 29th in Portland! Have you gone with your family to a Black Lives Matter protest this summer?

Lownsdale Square was also a favorite gathering place for early members of the IWW, and for May Day demonstrations by workers and communists in the 1930's. It was also the site of the 2011 Occupy Wallstreet movement, which started in New York City, and protested against economic inequality. The Occupy Portland protests happened in the Plaza Blocks, and lasted slightly longer than the occupation in NYC, almost two and a half months!



Battle of the Park Blocks

Address: 1436 SW Park Ave

In May 1970, the US was currently in the Vietnam War. The president at the time, President Nixon, decided to expand the war by invading Cambodia, and protests broke out all over the country against the war. In Portland, Portland State University students and faculty led a huge protest, going on strike, and closing the campus for four days to protest! They gathered in the Park Blocks, and convinced others to join their strike. The blocked traffic with barricades built from park benches and other items they found at construction sites. When Tom McCall, the Governor of Oregon called for PSU to reopen the university, and protesters refused to take down a first aid tent, riot police attacked them with clubs. Almost 30 protesters were badly injured, and this became known as the Battle of the Park Blocks. Later, over 5,000 Portlanders marched to city hall to demand that the organizers of the police riot be punished.



