

AN EYEFUL OF HISTORY

■ New historic mural graces visitor center wall

By **CURT KIPP**

WILSONVILLE SPOKESMAN

Visitors and residents can now see Wilsonville's history through the eyes of an artist.

Several artists, actually.

That's because a new historic mural was installed last week at the Wilsonville-Clackamas County Visitor Information Center.

It was created by muralist Hector Hernandez and community members at the Wilsonville Festival of Arts: Art on the Town back in June.

"It was more like a dialogue with the community at different stages of the project," he said. "For me, it's a learning process. I learn from the community."

The acrylic-on-canvas mural, four feet tall and 23 feet wide, was based on ideas conceived by Hernandez and the Wilsonville Arts and Culture Council.

It includes such historic objects as a Willamette River steamboat, the Oregon Electric Railroad bridge over the same river, the old Methodist church, the Wilsonville Cash Store, a tractor, pioneer and ferry proprietor Alphonso Boone, a barn, and a Calapooia tribe member.

The most enduring sight on the Wilsonville landscape – towering, snow-capped Mt. Hood – overlooks the entire scene.

These images represent



CURT KIPP / WILSONVILLE SPOKESMAN

Hector Hernandez (left) and Theonie Gilmore talk about the new mural, which is seen on the floor behind them.

Wilsonville's natural features as well as its transition from farming to transit and trade, he said.

After the festival, the mural was refined into its final form by Hernandez over the summer. He fixed mistakes and blended the different approaches to the images to make it a cohesive whole.

The mural is monochromatic on the sides – bluish to the left, greenish to the right – fusing the color schemes together in the central third of the mural.

According to artist Hernandez, the mural was designed to work with its architectural setting, in keeping with the Mexican school of painting, which is the artist's main influence. "After seeing the mural in place, I was excited to

see how it works in the building," Hernandez said.

A plaque to explain the context of the mural will be installed later on, he added.

Theonie Gilmore, chairwoman of the Wilsonville Arts and Culture Council, contacted Hernandez after seeing his work at Portland Community College. She said she was impressed with the muralist's final product.

"I think it's really interesting," Gilmore said. "He's used color in a really interesting way."

There are three other identical spaces inside the visitor center, high up towards the ceiling, where murals of the same size could be installed.

"In terms of the next project,

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Historic mural

■ **HOUSED AT THE CLACKAMAS COUNTY VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER**, 29600 S.W. Park Place, above the Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce office. Hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday; closed holidays. 503-682-0411.

■ **WILSONVILLE ARTS & CULTURE COUNCIL:** Theonie Gilmore, executive director, 503-638-6933, Theonie@wilsonvillearts.org. Web: wilsonvillearts.org.

my ambition is to move from the historical aspect into more contemporary themes," Hernandez said. "The second mural will be based on more recent history. The third and fourth will be based on the current community and the surrounding areas."

The newer murals would move away from the monochromatic color schemes of the first mural, drawing on a richer palette of colors, he said.

The plan is to involve community members in each one, as was done with the original. According to Gilmore, many who helped paint the mural at the festival were grateful for the opportunity.

"There were a lot of high school arts kids that did it, that got a kick out of doing it," she said. ■