

Hutson Museum

By Eckard Toy

The Hutson Museum, a barn-red, old-style building with a panoramic view of Mount Hood, is a prominent landmark in Parkdale in the upper Hood River Valley. The museum, located on the two-acre National Historic Site at the southern terminus of the historic Mount Hood Railroad, began as a display of family rock collections in the basement of Jesse and Winifred Hutson's orchard home. Avid rock collectors and colorful story tellers, the Hutsons created a popular attraction for local schoolchildren in the decades after World War II.

Following the deaths of Jesse and Winifred, the Hutson heirs looked for a way to continue the family tradition. Local residents responded by establishing a community corporation in 1993 and constructing a building in the style of the nearby Ries-Thompson House, the oldest remaining residence in Parkdale (ca. 1900). Packed with exhibit cases, the museum displays an eclectic mix of rocks and minerals, Native American artifacts, military items from the two world wars, and local memorabilia. "In all the world," reads its brochure, "you won't find another museum like this one."

A small botanical garden of native plants adjoins the museum grounds next to the railroad's two-acre National Historic Site. The museum is staffed by volunteers and attracts visitors and occasional student field trips from April to October.

Sources

Crowley, Susan Garrett, ed. *Legacy: A Centennial Celebration of Hood River and the Columbia Gorge*. Hood River: Hood River News, c. 1995.

Merz, Janice Hall, and Lewis A. Merz, Sr., eds. *History of Hood River County, Oregon, 1852-1982*. Hood River: Hood River Historical Society, 1982.

The Oregon Encyclopedia

https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/hutson_museum_parkdale/