

TO: HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

THROUGH: Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, AICP, Deputy Community Development Director and Planning Administrator

FROM: Kimberli Fitzgerald, AICP, Historic Preservation Officer

SUBJECT: Request to Initiate Local Historic Resource Nomination for the Eco Earth Globe located at: 230 Front Street SE

ISSUE:

Proposed initiation of Local Historic Resource nomination for the Eco Earth Globe located at 230 Front Street SE (Marion County Assessor's Tax Lots 073W27BA01492 (**Attachment A**)).

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the HLC initiate the local historic designation of the Eco Earth Globe due to historic association with the Oregon Pulp and Paper Mill and Boise Cascade as well as for significance as one of Salem's first community projects that adaptively reused an industrial structure, converting it to a piece of art representing the earth and symbolizing world peace and cultural diversity.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

The applicant, the Salem Public Art Commission, has requested that the Salem Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) initiate the local historic resource nomination for the Eco Earth Globe (1960). The Eco-Earth Globe is significant for its association with the Oregon Pulp and Paper Mill and Boise Cascade as well as for significance as one of Salem's first community projects that adaptively reused an industrial structure, converting it to a piece of art representing the earth and symbolizing world peace and cultural diversity(**Attachment B**).

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Historic Designation

According to SRC 230.010(c)(2) any person may file a request with the Council or the Historic Landmarks Commission for initiation of the designation of a local historic resource. Designation is a Type IV procedure under SRC 300. The HLC may choose to initiate a designation, hold a public hearing on the nomination and make a recommendation to City Council regarding the proposed designation. Provided owner consent is granted per SRC 230.010(f), under Salem Revised Code (SRC) Chapter 230.010 an application for the designation of a local resource designation may be granted by the Salem City Council if the resource meets the criteria for age, significance and integrity as outlined in SRC 230.010(e).

1. **SRC 230.010 (e) (1) Age:** *The proposed historic resource is at least 50 years old, or demonstrates exceptional significance if less than 50 years of age.*

Findings: The resource is approximately 60 years of age; therefore, staff recommends the HLC find that this criterion has been met.

2. **SRC 230.010 (e) (2) Significance:** *The proposed historic resource demonstrates significance in at least one of the following areas:*

- a. **Cultural Significance:** *(i) Contributes to the character and historic identity of the neighborhood or City; (ii) Makes a contribution to the historic character of a historic resource, neighborhood, district, or City as a whole*

Findings: Staff recommends that the HLC find that the potential resource has cultural significance for its association with the Oregon Pulp and Paper Company and Boise Cascade as an example of a low-pressure accumulator that allowed the plant to reuse sulfur dioxide, the residue from the chip cooking process. The process saved the company from having to buy more sulfur dioxide and cut down on pollution. The potential resource also has cultural significance for its association with the Salem community efforts to adaptively reuse this industrial structure, which residents requested be left behind when Boise Cascade was demolished in 1982. Citizens and volunteers worked over the course of many years to convert it to a piece of art representing the earth and symbolizing world peace and cultural diversity.

- b. **Human Significance:** *(i) Is associated historically with the life or activities of a person, group, organization or institution that has made a significant contribution to the local community; or (ii) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history; or (iii) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information concerning prehistory or history.*

Findings: The pulp mill closed in June 1982, and the City of Salem asked that Boise Cascade leave the acid ball with the idea that it could become an amenity in the new Riverfront Park. The community art project was funded by the Salem community-businesses and individuals. Volunteers worked an estimated 30,000 hours over a five-year period to convert the one-time eyesore into a public work of art in the south end of Salem's Riverfront Park. Staff recommends that the HLC find that the resource has human significance for its association with the local Salem community who worked for five years to adaptively reuse this industrial structure, converting it to a piece of art.

- c. **Architectural Significance:** *(i) Is significant as an example of a particular architectural style, building type, structural type, or method of construction; or (ii) Is the work of an acknowledged master or architect, or possesses high artistic values.*

Findings: The Eco-Earth Ball retains the original form and is in its original location, however the exterior has changed due to the addition of the tiles and does not reflect the work of an acknowledged master or architect. Therefore, staff recommends the HLC find that the resource is not currently a significant example of a particular architectural style.

3. **SRC 230.010 (e) (3) Integrity:** *The proposed historic resource retains sufficient original design characteristics, craft work, or material to serve as an example of an architectural period, significant building type or structural type, or recognized architectural style.*

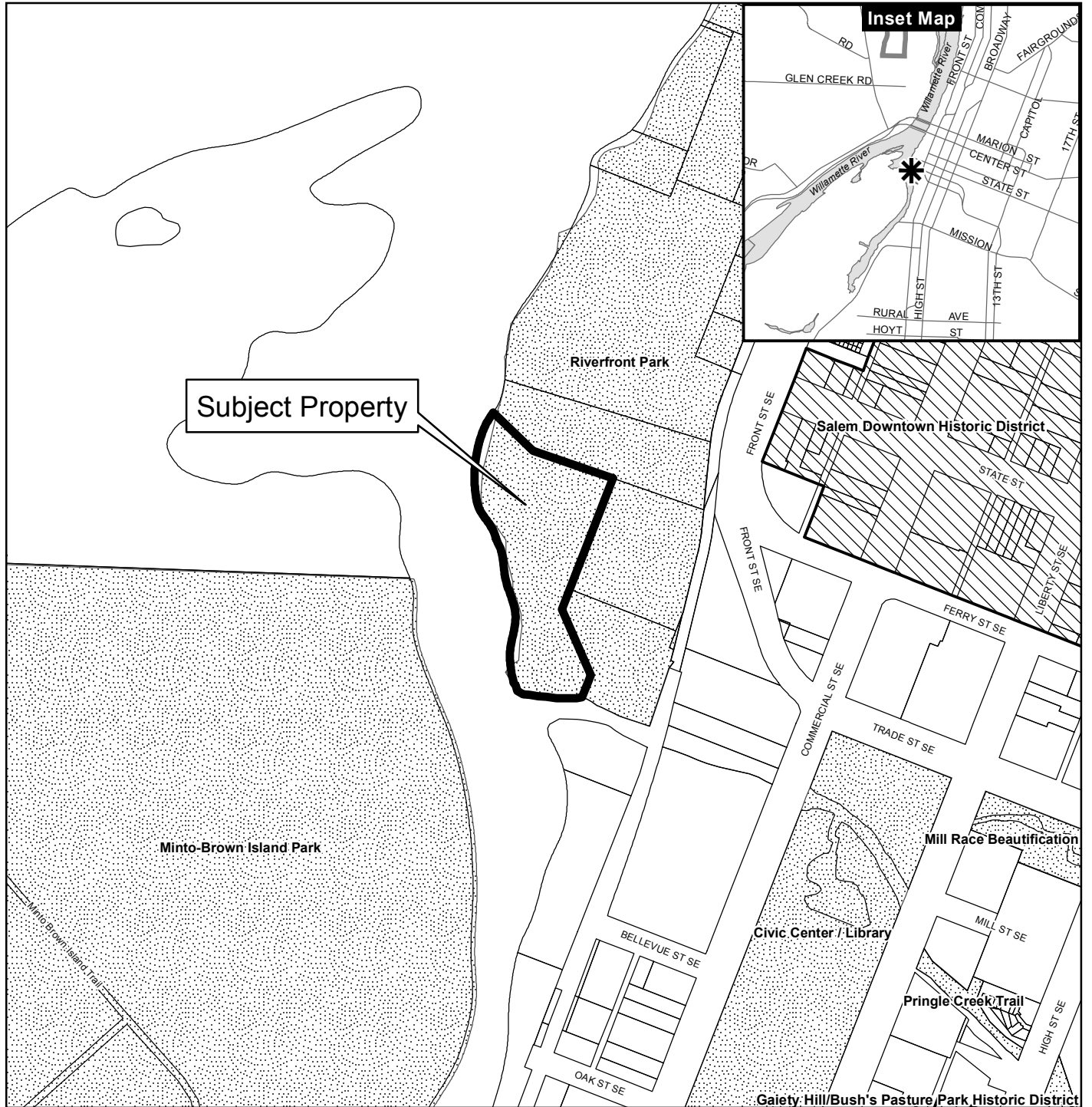
Findings: The Eco-Earth Ball retains the original form and is in its original location. While the exterior surface has changed due to the addition of the artistic tiles, this alteration does not impact the overall form of the structure itself and conveys the association to the significant community effort to adaptively reuse the acid ball into a community art piece. Staff recommends that the HLC find that the resource retains sufficient original integrity to convey its historical and cultural significance and this criterion has been met.

HLC Alternatives






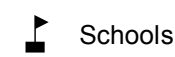

1. **No Action:** If the HLC finds that the threshold for initiation of local historic designation has not been met, the HLC can find that the proposed resource is not eligible for designation and therefore take no action initiating the designation.
2. **Initiation.** Should the HLC find that the applicant has made the case for initiating the designation of this historic resource, the HLC can find that the proposed resource is eligible for designation and therefore proceed with initiating the Type IV process for designation.

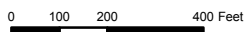
Attachment: (A) Vicinity Map
(B) SPAC Letter requesting Initiation of Historic Landmark Designation for the Eco-Earth Globe

Vicinity Map Eco-Earth Globe Location (073W27BA01492)



Legend

-  Taxlots
-  Urban Growth Boundary
-  City Limits
-  Outside Salem City Limits
-  Historic District
-  Schools
-  Parks



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January 11, 2022

Kimberli Fitzgerald
Salem Historic Landmarks Commission

SUBJECT: SPAC Request to Initiate Eco-Earth Globe Local Historic Resource Nomination

Dear Ms. Fitzgerald:

The Salem Public Art Commission is pleased to support a Local Historic Resource nomination for the Salem Eco-Earth Globe (former Boise Cascade Acid Ball) in Riverfront Park. This beloved community icon was created from an industrial relic of the Boise Cascade Paper Mill (previously Oregon Pulp and Paper), which operated in Salem from the 1920's until the mill operation finally closed in 1982. The artwork was conceived from the spherical Acid Ball that remained onsite and was designed to symbolize world peace, cultural diversity and global awareness.

Hundreds of local volunteers and students came together over a period of five years (from 1999 to 2003) to transform the steel acid storage ball into a 26-foot diameter tile mosaic of the Earth. This incredible piece of public art was officially gifted to the Salem community on June 28, 2003. A proclamation was signed by Governor Ted Kulongoski to officially commemorate the day as Eco-Earth Day in Oregon.

A Local Historic Resource designation would highlight the significance of this globe in our community and will help to ensure its continued care. The Salem Public Art Commission applauds the Historic Landmarks Commission work to identify and protect Salem's unique heritage for the present and future generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine D'Arcy".

Christine D'Arcy, Chair
Salem Public Art Commission

Eco Earth Globe

Narrative for Historic Resource Record submission

Draft 11-22-2021 Chris D'Arcy (with updates by Kimberli Fitzgerald, City of Salem)

Write a general exterior description, including building shape, height, roof type, and any special features.

The Eco Earth Globe is a massive community artwork depicting the Earth's globe with imagery representing the geography, peoples and animals of the world. The artwork is an intricate ceramic tile mosaic adhered to the exterior of a 26-foot diameter spherical steel industrial storage tank originally used by Boise Cascade to hold acidic solution. The tank stands on its original spot at the former plywood processing plant which closed in 1982, now in the south end of Salem's Riverfront Park. The Eco-Earth Globe, when it was the acid ball, stored the acid that Boise Cascade used to break down wood chips into pulp.

Now it is adorned with more than 86,000 tiles making up the continents, islands, seas and oceans of the world. About 200 larger handmade glazed ceramic icons depict wildlife, cultures, religions, historic events, technology and mythical creatures. The icons were created by both professional and student artists under the supervision of Eco-Earth art director Mary Heintzman. More than 125 students from public and private high schools in Salem and Keizer helped sculpt, fire and paint the icons.

For nearly three years, the globe was been covered with a huge, plastic shroud while volunteers worked on three stories of scaffolding. Professional tile setters Dave and Dean Chrowl and Tom Rodriguez, all of Salem, spent dozens of Sundays, including Father's Day, applying the tiles and icons to the globe.

They placed the tiles on a grid map developed by Salem geographer Jule Youngren, who worked 18 months to get accurate measurements that could be traced onto the ball.

The acid sphere makeover was a volunteer community art project that started in 1999; Eco-Earth was completed in 2003.

Write a general interior description, including general layout, major rooms, and any special features.

In spring of 2000, preparation began on the sphere itself. An access port was cut into the ball and a very special door and lock were installed.

List known or probable alterations and the approximate date the work was done.

To begin preparations of the tank, extraneous protrusions were removed from the stainless steel ball. The Army Corps of Engineers designed and installed a new footing. A "plaster" layer was placed over the surface of the tank as a substrate to aid in tile adhesion, and probably as a buffer for when the tank expands and contracts due to

temperature changes. It is unknown if there was any preparations of the surface before a plaster was placed over the globe or if there is any mesh or other form of armature used inside the plaster layer. The expansion joints do extend through the “plaster” layer. The surface of the plaster is rough, with a notched trowel texture visible in many areas.

Field tiles were assembled before being installed. The tiles were assembled in sections, and a facing was used to keep them together. This eased installation so larger groups of tiles could be placed at once. Field tiles were set after an area was covered in adhesive with a square notched trowel. The adhesive is believed to be Granirapid. It appears the artist-made tiles were back-buttered before placement.

After the tile was set, the grout and expansion joint caulk was placed, followed by a coating sprayed over the mosaic after its completion.

History of the Eco Globe & Oregon Pulp and Paper Mill and Boise Cascade

The Oregon Pulp and Paper Mill complex was located on the east shore of the Willamette River, and the north side of Pringle Creek (aka South Mill Creek). The mill building was originally constructed in 1920 for \$800,000 and included a two story main building with one paper making machine, a sulphite building and a boiler house. (*Statesman Journal*. 4-3-20, page 1). The first car of paper was shipped on October 1, 1920. Ben Maxwell of the Capital Journal noted that by 1948 the Mill employed 850 people and expanded to include four paper making machines. In 1948 the mill processed a half million feet of logs and produced 34,000 tons of mimeograph, parchment and other types of paper (*Capital Journal*. 1-28-1949, page 16). The 1926/27 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Sheet 201, Vol II) shows the Mill complex and paper mill buildings. By 1950, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows additional buildings reflecting the expansion of their operations. Boise Cascade purchased Oregon Pulp and Paper in April 1962, and soon after, the company was required to reduce pollution and sulfur dioxide emissions which were implemented between 1969-1975 (Zimmerman, “Paper Mill a Part of Downtown History” *Statesman Journal*. 10-09-16).

On August 7, 1960 the 10-ton, 26’ diameter tank for acid storage was pushed by a tugboat on the Willamette River for installation in what is now Riverfront Park. Previously the Oregon Pulp and Paper company had used wooden tanks but these needed replacement since the acid destroyed the wooden walls of these tanks. The tank held acids used in ‘cooking’ wood chips into pulp. According to a June 22, 2003 article in the Statesman Journal (“*Industry got the acid ball rolling*”, 6-22-2003, page 10A), the tank was constructed by Northwest Copper Works in Portland. Once installed, this tank worked with another larger tank (30’ in diameter). This ball was steel and lined with brick but was destroyed during the demolition of the paper mill. The smaller acid ball was also steel lined with brick and was used as a low-pressure accumulator. Both

balls worked together to extract sulfur dioxide during the chip cooking process which saved the company from having to buy sulfur dioxide and also reduced pollution.

The pulp mill closed in June 1982, however Boise Cascade continued operations for paper production until they closed operations in 2007. Demolition of the Boise Cascade complex began soon after in 2008, culminating in 2009 with the final demolition of the south block structure. What remains north of Pringle Creek is the concrete slab, and the concrete foundation structure underneath the slab.

The City of Salem acquired the riverfront after Boise Cascade shut down in 1982. The City of Salem asked that Boise Cascade leave the acid ball with the idea that it could become an amenity in the new Riverfront Park. The Statesman Journal asked residents to send in their ideas about what the City could do with the acid ball in their March 5, 1995 article: "*City Sees potential in Mill Relic*" (*Statesman Journal*, 3-5-1995, page 1).

Conceived by Mayor Roger Gertenrich, the community art project was funded by the Salem community-businesses and individuals. Volunteers worked an estimated 30,000 hours over a five year period to convert the one-time eyesore into a public work of art in the south end of Salem's Riverfront Park. Members of the public contributed more than \$70,000 by purchasing country flags for \$50 each and icons for \$200.

Project board members felt they could not "sell" the Statue of Liberty ceramic icon on the Eco-Earth, so that icon was reserved for the men and women of the U.S. military. Gov. Ted Kulongoski officially dedicated the icon in their honor on May 29, 2003.

The Eco-Earth's board of directors, chaired by former Salem mayor Roger Gertenrich, set the unveiling to coincide with the annual World Beat Festival at the park. The Eco-Earth globe of the world was turned over to the people of Salem, Oregon, on June 28, 2003. The Statesman Journal reported on the unveiling of the Eco-Earth Globe in their June 29, 2003 article "Eco-Earth unveiled for Kids" (*Statesman Journal*, page 21). Reporter Sarah Evans shared that after five years of work transforming the Boise Cascade tank into the tile covered globe, the Eco-Earth board members unveiled the project and turned it over to the City of Salem. Steve Jacobson, the project manager called out to the kids in the audience at the dedication: "This project was done for you kids.. this is a present for you." Governor Kulongoski also signed a proclamation to set aside June 28, 2003, Eco-Earth Day in Oregon. The gift to the city carried a value of at least \$1 million.

The globe is located south of the Riverfront Carousel, which opened in June 2001, also representing a huge volunteer effort. The Eco Earth Globe was conceived of and designed to symbolize world peace, cultural diversity and global awareness.



BEN MAXWELL / Courtesy of Salem Public Library

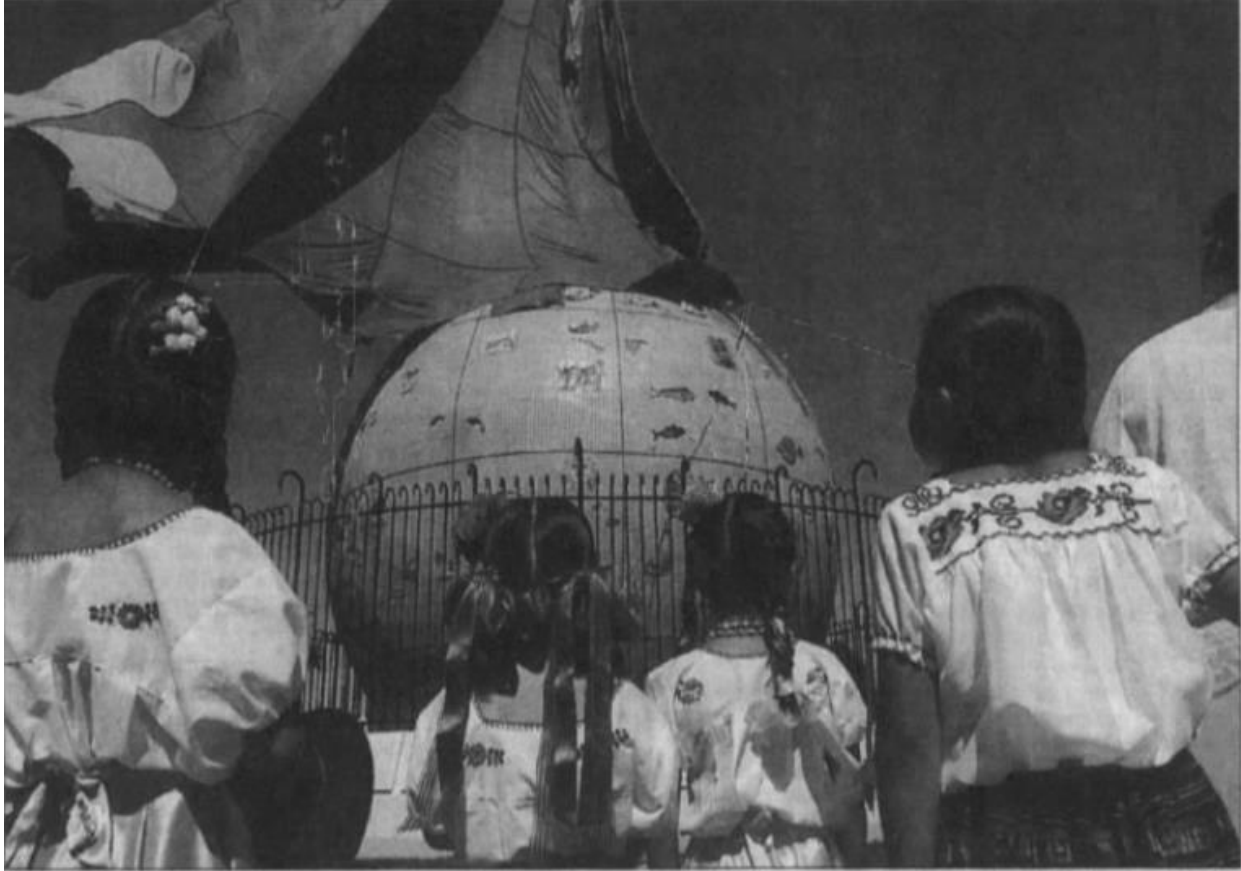
ARRIVAL: A 10-ton globe tank for acid storage is pushed by a tugboat on the Willamette River to Salem on Aug. 7, 1960. Before the tank's arrival, only wooden tanks had been used in Salem.

June 22, 2003, Statesman Journal page 10A



Timothy J. Gonzalez/Statesman Journal

March 5, 1995 – Statesman Journal Page 1



TIMOTHY J. GONZALEZ / Statesman Journal

WONDERFUL WORLD: Dancers from a children's ballet group watch Saturday as **Eco-Earth** is unveiled at Riverfront Park in Salem.

June 29, 2003 page 21 "Eco-Earth unveiled for Kids"

**City of Salem
LOCAL HISTORIC RESOURCE NOMINATION FORM**

A. OWNER/CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name:
Mailing Address:
City/State/Zip:
Phone number:
E-mail:
Date Submitted:

B. PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Historic Name, if known:
Date of Construction:
Street Address:
Salem, Oregon
County: Marion Polk

C. EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

1. Siding material(s). Original or replacement?

2. Window type(s) & material(s). Original or replacement?

3. Significant architectural features; other descriptions:

4. Alterations and Approximate Dates:

D. WHY IS THE PROPERTY SIGNIFICANT?

NOTE: Current exterior (all facades) and interior photographs of significant features are required for evaluation. (Please indicate if you wish to have the photos returned.)

Photo Log

Photo No.	Direction	Description