Welcome to the 2019 NeighborWalks season and Sellwood!

The Sellwood-Moreland Neighborhood overlooks the Willamette River and borders the Brooklyn Neighborhood to the north, Eastmoreland to the east, the city of Milwaukie to the south. It began as an independent city in 1889 and was annexed by Portland in 1893. PortlandNeighborhood.com describes it as less hipster than Mississippi and Alberta, but more family centered, walkable, and a livable community that is welcoming to all. Its neighborhood association, the Sellwood Moreland Improvement League (SMILE), is the oldest in the city, with 8 committees ranging from Land Use to Transportation, Emergency Preparedness to sponsoring annual events. It is the only neighborhood association that operates two historic properties: the Oaks Pioneer Church and the SMILE Station, a firehouse built in 1926 which has been remodeled for neighborhood use.

There are 42,189 residents, 18,135 households, average age is 35. Its neighborhood paper, The Sellwood Bee, has been in publication since 1906. It has 3 parks: Sellwood, Sellwood Riverfront Park, and Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge which is 163 acres of meadows, woodlands, and wetlands.

Today’s walk explores Westmoreland Park (technically in the Eastmoreland Neighborhood), 45 acres purchased by the city in 1935. It was previously known as Fairways Addition and had been a dairy, brickyard, and airstrip; “Brookfield Field” was named after a Reed College grad who lost his life in WWI on a recon mission. Early on, a casting pond and model yacht lagoon was constructed with water from Crystal Springs. Then in 1942, a baseball stadium was built, named Sckavone Field, after Nick Sckavone, a local druggist, who advocated many years for its construction. Several years later, lawn bowling facilities were constructed.

The first incidents of Crystal Springs overflowing were documented 1940’s. In 1974 the concrete walls channeling the walls were failing. Water quality, geese problems, damaged stream edges, dying trees, and flooding in the park became pressing issues. Increased water temperature threatened fish and wildlife habitat. In 1996 Crystal Springs overflowed for 18 months. Questions arose about the future of the park and the creek. In 2003, Portland Parks and Rec worked with the community to develop the Westmoreland Park Master Plan, finding a balance for the environment, recreation, and the neighborhood. The children’s park, completed in 2014 was a PP&R Nature Play Initiative pilot.

The restoration of Crystal Springs Creek (a tributary of Johnson Creek) which transformed the duck pond into a wetland was a multi-partner project: US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Environmental Services, Tri-Met, Metro, and PP&R. Wildlife now includes fish, river otters, heron, eagles, frogs, ducks, and an assortment of birds. Coho, chinook and steelhead migrate through the wetlands to the ocean and back again to spawn. There are also 2000 native plants and trees. The improved amenities brings nature back into an urban center.

The park is home to the Portland Pétanque Club (boules) and the Portland Lawn Bowling Club. It also has a soccer & softball fields, tennis & basketball courts, and picnic areas.

Nearby places to eat? So many! PDX Sliders, Papa Haydn’s, Thai Lahnna, Jade Bistro, Sellwood Bottle Shop, Gino’s, 3 Food Cart sites: Piknik Park, Sellwood Corner, Samaria Lunch Box. (Just to name a few.)
A big thanks to Moreland Presbyterian Church for their generosity and kindness in allowing us to use their church for our opening walk!

For route details visit: https://www.mapmywalk.com/routes/view/2517466204

Don’t miss the next NeighborWalks: Who Knew it was Luuwit, Tuesday, June 4 • 10:00AM
Meet: Luuwit View Park, NE 127th & NE Fremont St, Portland

Complete the online waiver and make check-in simpler: https://aarp.cvent.com/2019NWwaiver

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