Approximately 11 miles east of 1860’s Portland, a small community began like so many Oregon towns in the 1800s, as a grove of stately fir and cedar trees. Before the early white settlers, the area was inhabited by the Clackamas tribe of the Chinookan people. It was known by many as “Camp Ground” or Powell’s Valley after the Powell family who settled here.

Now linked to Portland via the MAX system, the early inhabitants and travelers to Gresham were also served by an electric rail system that also served other area towns. Does Springwater and the Linnemann Station sound familiar? This rail system was used to bring needed supplies and personnel to the dam being built at Cazadero on the Clackamas River in Estacada. This rail line also provided a safer mode of travel through bear and cougar-infested woods on the way west from Gresham toward Portland.

The Center for the Arts Plaza is now the home of the Farmers’ Market from May to October. RESTROOMS HERE. The Market has been at the Plaza for 2 years but has been going on since the early days when this area was known for its vigorous berry and vegetable gardens. The sculptures on the north side of the park represent the fine arts: a pen for literature, a tutu for dance, a trumpet for music, and a paint brush for visual arts. There are sidewalk paintings on the two west side corners showing environmental scenes.

On the corner of Powell Blvd and SE Roberts is the Gresham Heroes Memorial. Besides the Armed services, it also honors Gresham Police and Firemen. It is maintained by VFW Post 180. We will cross Powell Blvd at a pedestrian crossing just west of this Memorial.

The Main City Park, one of 30+ parks in the area, covers 21.6 acres along the Springwater Trail. It is a full service community park that once was home to the Mount Hood Jazz Festival in the early 2000s. In 2012, an all-star Little League team from Gresham represented Oregon at the Little League World Series in Williamsport, VA.

RESTROOMS HERE.

Tsuru Island, AKA the Gresham Japanese Garden, is a ¾ acre island created by Johnson Creek. Originally constructed in the mid-1970s, it was a gift to the city from the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) as a memorial for the Nisei, or 2nd generation Japanese Americans. It contained 5000 rocks from the Columbia River and stones from Johnson Creek. It eventually fell into disrepair until 2011 when the JACL donated money and the Gresham-Ebetsu Sister City Association adopted the garden. Restorations took several years and thousands of volunteer hours to complete. The purple heart-wood bridge was restored in 2013. In 2017, the Ebetsu Plaza was dedicated to honor the 40th Anniversary of the sister city pact. The bridge and the Azumaya on the island were all hand carved, stained, and fitted by local volunteers.

The center of old Gresham contains many original buildings from the early 1900s. The Congdon Hotel (1911) can be seen at 101 N Main Ave, home of Bella Cupcakes. The Ely Building is at 112 N Main Ave (1915). On the corners of Main and 3rd, there are 4 bronze sculptures that represent unique aspects in Gresham’s history and it’s charm: Driscoll, the guide-dog, “Mr Gresham” Todd Kirnan, a blue Heron, and “Teddy” who now sits and watches the parade of people enjoying the many nearby restaurants and shops.

As we walk along NW Miller Ave past the new Gresham Library, try to imagine that the area beyond the trees was filled with Multnomah County Fair revellers. Starting in 1907, the County Fair was held in Gresham for many years, providing such attractions as a race track, carnival rides, rodeos, 4H animal and domestic-skills competitions, military exhibits, parades, etc. The space is now occupied by the Gresham Town Fair shopping mall. Between 1913 and 1990, the beautiful Tudor style building at the corner of Main and 4th was the home to the Gresham Library. Andrew Carnegie’s foundation provided funding for building this and other libraries throughout the nation. Now the building is home to the Gresham History Museum. It is well worth an extended visit for any history buffs.

Along our route back toward the Arts Plaza, we will pass a beautiful wall mural along 3rd St, between Roberts and Main. It depicts many aspects of life in Gresham, including berry farms, logging camps, car rallies, teddy-bear parades, the fair’s Ferris wheel, and a portrait of Walter Quintin Gresham, US Postmaster general in Washington,
DC, in 1883. Gresham’s name was suggested by a resident shop keeper for the local post office, originally called Camp Ground. This was obviously easily approved in 1884 to honor his services to the nation as a Civil War veteran and as postmaster general.

The route back to the finish will again pass the Farmers’ Market. You are invited to stay to browse, or to continue to the finish point about 6 blocks north on NE Kelly Ave.

**Nearby Eateries:** M&M restaurant, Sunny Han’s, Bella Cupcakes, Sweet Betty’s Bistro, Cafe Delerium, Bocelli’s, Jazzy Bagel, Mojave Mexican, McCrae’s family restaurant, Nicholas Lebanese, or Red Lobster

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**For route details visit:**
https://www.mapmywalk.com/routes/view/2340382495

**Don’t miss the next NeighborWalks:** Alberta Arts District, Tuesday, July 2 • 10:00AM
Meet: Alberta Park Basketball Court, Killingsworth St. & 20th Ave, Portland

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

Check out the full schedule here:

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