



Senate History Rooms

Tour Information

With Senate Resolution 3 in 2011, the Oregon Senate designated five rooms near the Senate Chamber in honor of notable figures in Oregon history.

- *Senator W.H. Strayer Gallery*
- *Senator Lenn Hannon Reading Room*
- *Senator Kathryn Clarke Cloakroom*
- *Senator Debbs Potts Conference Room*
- *Floyd G. McMullen Conference Room*

Senator W.H. Strayer Gallery

- *Location: Corridor behind the Senate Chamber.*
- *About Senator W.H. ("Bill") Strayer:*
 - *Longest-serving Senator in Oregon history.*
 - *Longest-serving Senator in the old Capitol destroyed by fire in 1935.*
 - *Senator from Baker County for nearly 32 years from 1915 to 1946.*
 - *Senator Strayer was known as "one of the ablest thinkers and most impressive speakers in the upper house" and a Senator whose "colleagues are all his friends."*
- *Items of Interest:*
 - *Remembrance of Senator Strayer.*
 - *Pictures of every Senate President since statehood and noting their home county.*
 - *Pictures of the overall membership of the Senate for the past four decades.*
 - *Photograph of the 1915 Senate, which includes both Senator Strayer and Senator Kathryn Clarke (see inside).*
 - *Photograph of the 1939 Senate, the first Senate to serve in the present Capitol, and also featuring Senator Strayer.*
 - *1885 Oregon Senate Journal, signed by Senator J.K. Weatherford of Linn County who served in the Senate from 1885-87 and 1891-93.*
 - *Descriptions of other important events in Oregon Senate history.*

Senator Lenn Hannon Reading Room

- *Location: Room at the end of the Strayer Gallery.*
- *About Senator Lenn Hannon:*
 - *Second longest-serving Senator in Oregon history.*
 - *Longest-serving Senator in the current Capitol.*
 - *Senator from Ashland for nearly 30 years from 1975 to 2004.*
 - *Senator Hannon was known for his bipartisan friendships and as a Senator who “told it to you straight.”*
 - *This room is associated with Senator Hannon as he used to occasionally retire to this room during long floor sessions.*
- *Items of Interest:*
 - *Remembrance of Senator Hannon.*
 - *Newspaper article about Senator Hannon, with a photograph of Senator Hannon standing at the window in this room later named in his honor.*
 - *Awards and plaques celebrating Senator Hannon’s public service on loan from his family.*
 - *Senate Journals from the period of the new Capitol, including the 1975 Journal describing Senator Hannon’s first swearing-in ceremony.*
 - *Books by, for, and about Oregonians.*
 - *A large framed photograph of the old Capitol that was destroyed by fire in 1935. This photograph sits in the Hannon Reading Room and is visible for the length of the Strayer Gallery, symbolically linking together these two rooms and their namesakes in honor of their extended service to Oregon.*

Senator Kathryn Clarke Cloakroom

- *Location: Curved room immediately behind the Senate Chamber.*
- *About Senator Kathryn Clarke:*
 - *Elected in 1915 to represent Douglas County, becoming the first woman elected to the Oregon Senate.*
 - *Senator Clarke won a special election in January 1915 by 76 votes, ending a Constitutional controversy over the Governor's ability to fill a vacant Senate seat.*
 - *Women in Oregon earned the right to vote in 1912 and were first eligible for election to the Legislature in 1914, six years before the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1920.*
- *Items of Interest:*
 - *Remembrance of Senator Clarke.*
 - *Thanks to period pieces loaned by the Oregon Historical Society, the Clarke Cloakroom is designed to give visitors a sense of what a room in the old Capitol, before the 1935 fire, would have felt like when Senator Clarke served in 1915.*
 - *Senate Journals and photographs dating to the period before 1935.*
 - *A display showing the last Officers of the Senate to serve in the old Capitol before the fire in 1935. The display includes the 1935 Senate Journal opened to the final page of the Senate's official history in the old Capitol before the fire.*
 - *A blueprint of the old Capitol showing the historic cloakroom behind the Senate Chamber before the fire in 1935, and a description of the history of the current room.*

Senator Debbs Potts Conference Room

- *Location: Office occupied by the Secretary of the Senate.*

- *About Senator Eugene Debbs Potts:*
 - *Represented Josephine County in the Oregon Senate from 1961 to 1984.*
 - *Served as Senate President from 1967 to 1971.*
 - *Served 196 days as Governor while Governor Tom McCall occasionally travelled out of state.*
 - *Governor McCall honored Senator Potts as “one of the most decent public men, anywhere.”*
 - *Senator Potts occupied this office when serving as Senate President.*

- *Items of Interest:*
 - *Remembrance of Senator Potts.*
 - *Commemorative plaque placed in the room by his colleagues naming it “The Debbs Potts Conference Room.”*
 - *The plaque notes that this room was dedicated in honor of Senator Potts in 1976 upon the relocation of the Senate President’s Office to the newly built Senate wing.*
 - *A copy of Senate Concurrent Resolution 8 passed in 2005 honoring Senator Potts.*
 - *The Resolution recalls Senator Potts as “a true and good politician who knew and believed in personal integrity, an honorable man who dedicated his life to serving the people of Oregon.”*

Floyd G. McMullen Conference Room

- *Location: Conference room adjacent to the Hannon Reading Room.*
- *About Floyd G. McMullen:*
 - *Mr. McMullen was the only person killed in the fire that destroyed the old Capitol in 1935.*
 - *Mr. McMullen, from Hermiston, was a 22 year old volunteer firefighter studying law at Willamette University in Salem when he responded to the blaze.*
 - *Mr. McMullen was fatally struck by a cornice that fell from the burning Capitol building.*
 - *The room is associated with Mr. McMullen as it has been the traditional meeting place of the Floyd McMullen Fire Brigade, a group devoted to Oregon history, public policy, and public service.*
- *Items of Interest:*
 - *Memorial display honoring Mr. McMullen's place in Oregon history.*
 - *United States flag dating to the 1800's with 33 stars, symbolizing Oregon's place as the 33rd State admitted to the Union, donated by former Secretary of State Norma Paulus.*
 - *Copy of the 1849 Proclamation signed by Territorial Governor Joseph Lane extending the law of the United States over the Oregon Territory, and a copy of the Act of Congress admitting Oregon to the Union in 1859.*
 - *Ruins of the old Capitol destroyed by fire in 1935 rest in the park outside the window of this room honoring Mr. McMullen.*

