

# OURTOWN

SILVERTON, MT. ANGEL & SCOTTS MILLS  
WWW.OURTOWNLIVE.COM

## Our Town Archive

- Arts (14)
- Arts & Music (5)
- Briefs (20)
- Business (40)
- Community (113)
- Events & Holidays (30)
- Food & Drink (14)
- For Kids (8)
- Gardening (17)
- History & Culture (5)
- News (40)
- Obituary (60)
- Opinion / Columnists (17)
- Other (448)
- Outdoor Life (13)
- People (51)
- Pets (1)
- School (27)
- sports (28)
- Travel (3)

## Mural pluralism: Silverton's public art remains vivid thanks to volunteers

August 2019 Posted in Other

By Brenna Wiegand

Silverton's beautifully done and scrupulously maintained murals are drawing attention, both at home and abroad.

For the first time, Silverton Mural Society is exhibiting at the Silverton Fine Arts Festival Aug. 17-18.

"It is really nice of them to invite us," Vince Till, mural society vice president said. "We're going to set up some brick and concrete blocks and [muralist] Tonya Smithburg will demonstrate painting on rough surfaces, which will be very interesting."

He and Babs joined the Mural Society in 1993 when they moved to town from their log cabin and 40-acre farm on Crooked Finger Road. He plunged himself into the mural project, serving as president from 1996 through 2012 and vice president most of the



Babs and Vince Till have been advocates for Silverton's murals since 1993. Brenna Wiegand

Your Health (10)

>

Find us on 

Our Town on Facebook

## Mt. Angel Publishing, Inc.

401 Oak St., Silverton, OR 97381  
P.O. Box 927, Mt. Angel, OR 97362  
phone: 503-845-9499  
fax: 503-845-9202  
email: ourtown@mtangelpub.com  
web: www.mtangelpub.com

## Advertise and Interact

Advertising | Subscription  
News Tips | Letters to the Editor

other years. Babs was secretary for several years.

The Mural Society got its start in 1992 when Patti Geddes of Silverton, on a trip with husband George, was inspired by the beautiful murals in Chemainus, British Columbia, now totaling at least 54. Since then, Silverton Mural Society has produced 30 murals of its own and publishes a self-guided tour.

At its outset the Mural Society decided to only allow murals depicting Silverton history and culture or pivotal events in U.S. history. They hoped to inject Silverton's business community with new life by attracting to town visitors that otherwise might pass it by on their way to such destinations as Silver Falls State Park and The Oregon Garden. After all, it had worked in Chemainus.

"It took two years for them to convince the politicians and the people that run the town to go for it," Till said, "and when they finally did, they were able to revitalize the town."

### Silverton Mural Society

P.O. Box 880, Silverton, OR 97381  
www.silvertonmurals.com  
503-845-7688

Brochures: Silverton Chamber  
of Commerce, 426 S Water St.  
503-873-5615

#### How to help:

Donate time, skills, money, goods.  
Purchase ads to produce fliers.  
Purchase postcards, Silverton mural  
books, Bobbie the Dog T-shirts and  
feed the Silverton Mural Society jars  
at local businesses.

"Silverton was in the same boat back then and by going ahead with this we gradually built it back and it's now a growing part of people coming to see things in town."

Visitors will see, in pictorial form, the evolution of a rough-and-tumble, turn-of-the-century logging town into the Silverton, Oregon of today.

Between these walls they'll meet Silverton's heroes and other well-loved citizens and get a sense of its unique history, values and traditions. Between them, eight local artists are responsible for the 30 works of art scattered around town.

The mural project's success rides on the quality of its product - and very few towns have 26-year-old murals that look as good as the day the paint dried.

"Over the past 26 years we've learned what it takes to do the maintenance; what works and what doesn't," Till said.

The 20-year air force veteran said his job was doing whatever needed to be done to get the job done. Till's likeness, ever-present blue overalls and all, appears in the "Veterans Poem" mural painted by the late Larry Kassell.