

Margaret Prentice Moves to Willamette Oaks

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Central Presbyterian Church / Eugene, Oregon

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[NOTE: Margaret Prentice is an active older adult. Age 91, she loves to go hiking. Sometimes Margaret hikes with friends from church. However, she often hikes alone to enjoy the meditation. Margaret recently shared with me how she came to move from home to a senior apartment at Willamette Oaks.]

Margaret Prentice was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, in 1931. Her sister, Mary, was born 5 years later. After graduating from college at the University of Aberdeen, Margaret became an elementary schoolteacher. In 1956, Margaret's parents immigrated to America, and in 1957, Margaret immigrated to America also, joining them in Cleveland, Ohio.



Her Parent's Cottage in Aberdeenshire, Scotland (1936)

In Ohio, Margaret worked as a substitute teacher while attending Kent State University to earn her Ohio Teaching Certificate. She taught first graders in Willoughby, Ohio. As a member of First Presbyterian Church in Willoughby, Margaret helped teach Summer Bible School. A close friend from church introduced Margaret to her husband's friend and colleague, William J. Prentice, Jr. And, the rest was history.

Margaret and William "Bill" Prentice were married in 1964, and resided in Cleveland, Ohio, where they raised two children – Jay and Carolyn.

Bill Prentice worked as an engineer with General Electric. Bill retired in 1984, and in 1991 they moved west from Ohio to Eugene, Oregon. Factors that influenced their choice were: a university town, the proximity of mountains for hiking and cross-country skiing, beautiful Fern Ridge Reservoir for sailing, and nearness to the lovely Oregon Coast. Hiking, cross-country skiing, sailing in their boat on Fern Ridge Reservoir, Bill and Margaret had a ball! They purchased a small RV and travelled . . . to Alaska and to the Southwest. In 1996, Margaret joined Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene and served several terms as a deacon. Alas, nothing lasts forever. Husband Bill Prentice passed away in 2007.



Bill & Margaret Prentice (Circa 2005)

Margaret Prentice has always been an avid hiker. She is a member of the Obsidians, a non-profit outdoors club in Eugene, Oregon. Almost daily she walks along the Willamette River on a bike path that runs by her retirement complex. Periodically, she goes across the street and follows a path to the Delta Ponds. There, she goes birding or simply walks and relaxes with friends from church: Patty MacAfee, Pam & John Sheridan, and Charlie Thomas. Occasionally, Margaret drives her car about 7 miles to the Howard Buford Recreation Area and hikes. "Hiking in the Arboretum is easy for me, but I no longer hike to the top of 1,000-foot-high Mt. Pisgah." Margaret Prentice truly enjoys hiking in the forest alone. "Being alone in the forest is a meditation for me."

Things which led Margaret Prentice to move from her home to a senior apartment were:

- o Taking care of things: "I could do the ordinary things. But it became difficult to find people to do the big things like clean the gutters and clipping the hedges."
- o Becoming aware that she was living alone: "This could be a problem if I fell or passed out. How long would it take for someone to find me? In 2021 I had two fainting episodes. A friend and I started e-mailing each other every morning. Living alone began to seem unwise."

In late 2021, Margaret began considering moving to a senior apartment. “I knew that IF I moved anywhere, THEN it would be to Willamette Oaks with its proximity to walking paths along the Willamette River and paths leading to the Delta Ponds. Also, I had several friends who had lived in Willamette Oaks very happily.”

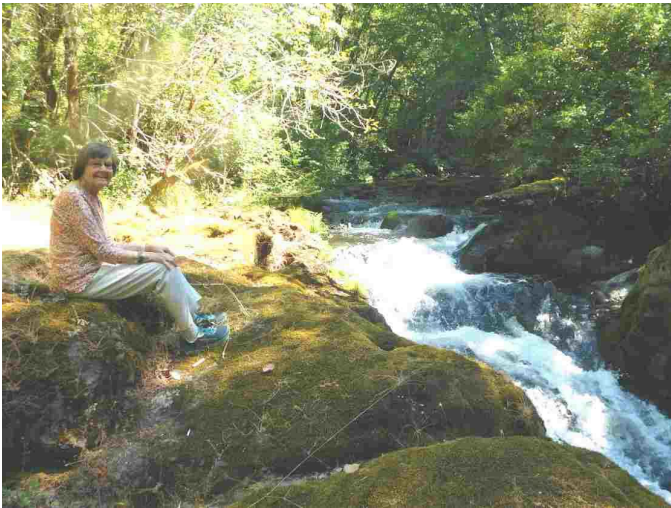
In October, 2021, Margaret Prentice’s two children, Jay and Carolyn, came out to visit Margaret, and together they visited Willamette Oaks Senior Apartments & Assisted Living. “We looked at different apartments. I really wasn’t sure that I wanted to move, but I started downsizing in case I decided to move.”

In November, 2021, Jay and Carolyn came back and helped Margaret clean out her attic. “I’m not a hoarder, but my husband Bill was. Dealing with all the stuff in the attic was overwhelming. That’s when I decided to go back and look again at Willamette Oaks.” The three of them were shown three different apartments. “When we saw this apartment on the 4th floor with a view out to the river, Jay said to me, ‘Mom, you can’t do better than this!’” When asked, Willamette Oaks said that they would hold the apartment until December 1st to give Margaret time to make up her mind.



WELCOME SIGN – Willamette Oaks

Margaret thought long and hard about moving, for this was a very difficult decision for her. “I loved my yard, and I had very wonderful neighbors. I mulled over the pros and cons for some time. After all that, I decided to go for it. And, I didn’t look back, for it was a very hard decision to make.” The fact that Margaret’s children live in other states – Jay lives in Hailey, Idaho; and Carolyn lives in Sarasota, Florida, in the winter and in Big Sandy, Tennessee, in the summer – was a factor in her decision.



Margaret Prentice – She hiked in to these Falls (August 2022)

“Selling my house was something that had to be done. I needed to know if I would have enough money to live in Willamette Oaks.” Fortunately, just before Margaret’s house was to be advertised for sale, a neighbor purchased it for his own parents.

Moving to Willamette Oaks was a huge transition for Margaret Prentice. “The three biggest transitions in my life have been moving from Scotland to the USA; moving from Ohio to Oregon; and moving from my home to Willamette Oaks.”



SUNSET – Viewed from Margaret Prentice’s Apartment in Willamette Oaks

“I like it here. Folks here have an active lifestyle. It is so much fun to get to know them and learn about their interesting lives. I love it here!”