

Hanford: Park will tell the story of site’s workers, scientists

Continued from Page 1A

The 300 residents of Richland were evicted and that town became a bedroom community for the adjacent Hanford site, skyrocketing in population. Workers labored around the clock to build reactors and processing plants to make plutonium, a key ingredient in nuclear weapons.

The park will tell the story of those workers, plus the scientists who performed groundbreaking research and the residents who were displaced, said Chip Jenkins of the National Park Service, which is jointly developing the park with the Energy Department.

“The intention of the park is to tell the full and complex and convoluted story,” Jenkins said. That story is still being developed, but will certainly include a Japanese perspective, he said.

“What happened at B Reactor changed the course of human history,” Jenkins said. “They went from sparsely populated ranching communities to the first packet of plutonium over the course of 18 months.”

Eventually, nine reactors were built at Hanford and operated during the Cold War to make plutonium for the U.S.



The Hanford nuclear reservation's famous B Reactor is shown in Richland, Wash. The B Reactor, the world's first full-sized reactor, will be part of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, the nation's newest national park.

nuclear arsenal. That work created more than 56 million gallons of radioactive waste that the government still spends more than \$1 billion a year to maintain and clean up.

While details of the new national park are still being worked out, French said, the Energy Department will continue its tours of the B Reactor and the old town sites that began in 2009 and fill up with some 10,000 visitors a year.

The plan is to greatly expand the number of tourists and school groups who visit

the site, she said.

Tours will occur from April to October, French said. Exhibits at the B Reactor include the exposed face of the reactor and the control room, where many visitors like to sit and be photographed at control panels, she said.

The Hanford story is far from over. Jenkins noted that thousands of scientists and other workers remain active on the Hanford site, inventing and implementing new techniques to clean up the massive volume of nuclear waste.



The old Hanford High School is shown near Richland, Wash.



Crab: Recreational crabbing is open in all of Washington’s coastal waters

Continued from Page 1A

Commercial crab boat lights will start dotting the horizon Jan. 1 as boats are allowed to set gear three days prior to the fishery opening. In Washington, the area north of Destruction Island will open later in coordination with tribal co-managers.

Fish and wildlife departments delayed the start of the season to conduct additional marine toxin testing and coordinate coastal openings. Results from these tests continue to show domoic acid levels below the health-safety threshold set by state pub-

lic health officials, said Dan Ayres, Washington coastal shellfish manager.

“We understand the hardship that this delay has caused the coastal crab industry,” Ayres said. “However, it’s important to help make sure that the crab going to the marketplace is safe to eat.”

Domoic acid, a natural toxin produced by certain types of marine algae, has disrupted shellfish fisheries this year along the West Coast. The marine toxin can be harmful or even fatal if consumed in sufficient quantities. Cooking or freezing

does not destroy the toxin in shellfish.

The Washington commercial crab fishery has an average annual value of \$38 million.

Recreational crabbing is open in all of Washington’s coastal waters and in Puget Sound, where marine toxins in crab have not been a problem.

For more information about Oregon’s shellfish marine biotoxin monitoring, call the shellfish safety information hotline at 800-448-2474 or visit the shellfish closures page at <http://1.usa.gov/1L4JyVm>.



A Dungeness crab awaits sorting in a crabpot.

EO Media Group
File Photo

Bridge: It handles 6,000 vehicles a day

Continued from Page 1A

hard people worked to make those things happen.”

The re-creation, which would likely be held during Astoria Regatta weekend, is one of several events being planned to honor the 4.1-mile bridge over the Columbia River that connects Oregon and Washington.

Organizers are hoping for a reunion of some of the workers who built the bridge, an engineering day for local schools and a free series of lectures, slide shows and movies.

The historical society is also planning an exhibit on the story of the bridge.

Burns said he wants to make next year the “year of the bridge.”

The City Council approved

\$9,500 in Promote Astoria funds for the celebration, and the Regatta and the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce are expected to help with planning.

At the time the bridge was built, it was hailed as the final link of U.S. Highway 101 on the West Coast through California, Oregon and Washington. For locals, though, the bridge was a more functional replacement for the ferries that plied the river.

City Councilor Cindy Price said she hopes the effort to bring one of the old ferries — the Tourist No. 2 — back to Astoria will be successful in time for the anniversary.

Price said she prefers that money from the Promote Astoria fund be distributed as specified by the city’s budget

committee, but believes the anniversary is worthy. The fund is made up of hotel-room taxes.

“I think this is a good example of a good exception,” she said.

The iconic bridge, which is owned by Oregon and Washington and handles about 6,000 vehicles a day, is undergoing a multiyear renovation.

The \$24 million bridge was paid off by tolls that were lifted in 1993, two years earlier than anticipated.

Bill Johnston, a transportation planner with the state Department of Transportation, said there is some regret that the tolls disappeared.

“We’ve spent more money maintaining the bridge than it cost to build it originally,” he said. “So tolls would have been a useful revenue source.”



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