



Luke Whittaker/Chinook Observer

Travis Kary pulls the cranberry boom along as Juan Hernandez uses a paddle to pull berries away from the edge during the last year's harvest at the Cranberry Museum and Research Center. The museum will hold a cranberry harvest during the Cranberrian Festival.

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Cranberry history and heritage

Cranberries became important to the Peninsula's economy during the late 19th century, when the fruit started being produced commercially, said Melinda Crowley, former director of the Cranberry Museum and Pacific Coast Cranberry Research Foundation board member.

Prior to that, there is record of local entrepreneurs engaging in commerce with wild cranberries. The indigenous people in the area incorporated cranberries in their diet, as well.

The industry continued to develop between the late 1880s and the turn of the century before hitting a period of stagnation, exacerbated by the non-native pests brought with East Coast vines and the high tax rates, start-up costs and marketing expenses, according to the Cranberry Museum.

In the early 1920s, however, help arrived in the form of a young undergraduate from the agriculture school at Washington State University. Researcher JD Crowley – Melinda Crowley's father-in-law – spent 30 years conducting tests with growers at the Cranberry Research Station and developed solutions to a number of local problems, in additions to methods for improving the harvests.

Growers didn't immediately adopt these solutions and the Great Depression made matters worse, but during the next 40 years, new changes to cultivation methods increased product yields and quality,

If You Go

2019 Cranberrian Festival

Cranberry Museum and Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

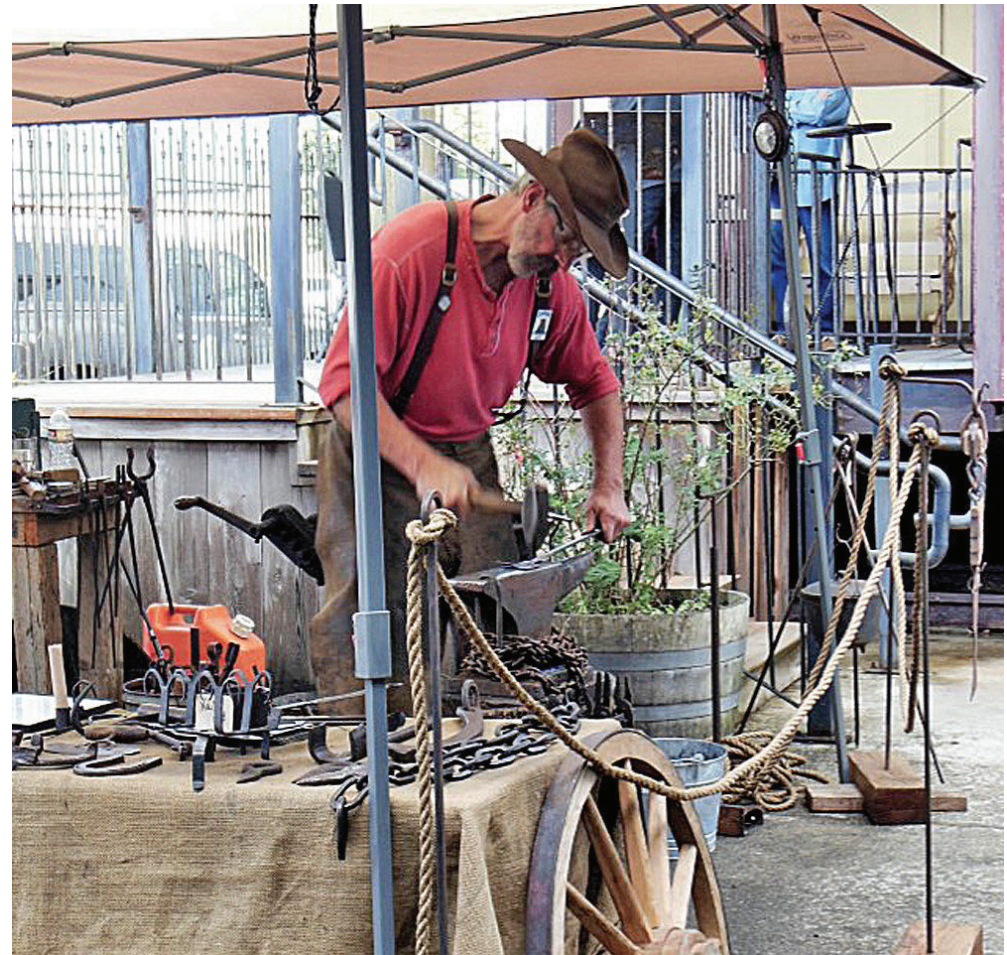
Details: Admission to the Columbia Pacific Heritage Museum is \$5 for both days; children 12 years and younger are free. Admission to the Cranberry Museum is free.

according to the museum.

The Pacific Coast Cranberry Research Foundation was established in the mid-1990s, around the same time commercial cranberry acreage on the Peninsula reached about 650 acres. Many growers also became part of the Ocean Spray collective, strengthening cranberry production as an important economic driver in the area, Millard said.

The cranberry's heritage has long been celebrated on the Peninsula, starting with the Cranberrian Fair held in the 1920s. During that harvest festival, Millard said, farmers showed off their harvest, local crafters brought their wares and baked goods were sold. The fair was discontinued with the Great Depression but resurrected about half a decade later by the heritage museum. The Cranberry Museum has participated as a partner for several years.

"We all work together to get people to come to the peninsula, have a good day, and get to know more about cranberries," Millard said.



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Blacksmith Gary Lewis from Portland will participate in this year's Cranberrian Festival.



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