

TODAY

Today is Thursday, May 27, the 147th day of 2021. There are 218 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

In 1941, the British Royal Navy sank the German battleship Bismarck off France with a loss of some 2,000 lives, three days after the Bismarck sank the HMS Hood with the loss of more than 1,400 lives.

In 1861, Chief Justice Roger Taney, sitting as a federal circuit court judge in Baltimore, ruled that President Abraham Lincoln lacked the authority to suspend the writ of habeas corpus (Lincoln disregarded the ruling).

In 1933, the Chicago World's Fair, celebrating "A Century of Progress," officially opened.

In 1937, the newly completed Golden Gate Bridge connecting San Francisco and Marin County, California, was opened to pedestrian traffic (vehicles began crossing the next day).

In 1942, Doris "Dorie" Miller, a cook aboard the USS West Virginia, became the first African-American to receive the Navy Cross for displaying "extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety" during Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

In 1964, independent India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, died.

In 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *United States v. O'Brien*, upheld the conviction of David O'Brien for destroying his draft card outside a Boston courthouse, ruling that the act was not protected by freedom of speech.

In 1994, Nobel Prize-winning author Alexander Solzhenitsyn returned to Russia to the emotional cheers of thousands after spending two decades in exile.

In 1998, Michael Fortier, the government's star witness in the Oklahoma City bombing case, was sentenced to 12 years in prison after apologizing for not warning anyone about the deadly plot. (Fortier was freed in January 2006.)

In 2018, LeBron James reached his eighth straight NBA Finals as the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Boston Celtics 87-79 in Game 7 of the semifinals.

Ten years ago: Astronauts Mike Fincke and Gregory B. Birely made history as the final spacewalkers of NASA's 30-year shuttle program, completing construction of the International Space Station with the smooth addition of an extension pole.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama became the first American chief executive to visit Hiroshima, the city where the U.S. dropped the first atomic bomb during World War II.

One year ago: Protests over the death of George Floyd in police custody rocked Minneapolis for a second night, with some people looting stores and setting fires. Protests spread to additional cities. The U.S. surged past a milestone in the coronavirus pandemic, with the confirmed death toll topping 100,000.

Today's Birthdays: Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is 98. Author John Barth is 91. Actor Lee Meriwether is 86. Singer Bruce Cockburn is 76. South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster is 74. Singer Siouxsie Sioux is 64. Actor Peri Gilpin is 60. Rock musician Sean Kinney (Alice In Chains) is 55. Actor Paul Bettany is 50. Rock singer-musician Brian Desveaux (Nine Days) is 50. Actor Jack McBrayer is 48. Rapper Andre 3000 is 46. Rapper Jadakiss is 46. TV chef Jamie Oliver is 46. Actor Michael Steger is 41. Actor Ethan Dampf is 27.

— Associated Press

LOCAL, STATE & REGION

SPRUCE GOOSE'S HISTORY, DIGITIZED

Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum seeks grant to protect extensive archive of photos, documents

BY KEVIN HARDEN • Oregon Capital Bureau

If you think Howard Hughes' plane the Spruce Goose is big (it is, it really is), then try this on for size: more than 1 million pieces of paper — documents, blueprints, original drawings and thousands of photographs.

That's what the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum in Yamhill County holds in a stack of shelves, file cabinets and cardboard tubes related to construction of the giant flying boat.

The museum hopes to get a state grant to move the entire collection into a new research facility, where it would be stored in more archive-friendly shelves, photo boxes and files. It also hopes to digitize most of the collection so researchers and the public can access it online.

"We don't really have a proper archive," said Michelle Kaufman, communications director for the Stoller Wine Group in Dayton, which owns the nonprofit museum's property along state Highway 18 about 45 minutes south of Portland. "We want a place where we can really showcase it. Where people can come and dig through the records to do their research."

Hughes' H-4 Hercules is an engineering marvel. It's one of the largest airplanes ever built. It's bigger than a Boeing 747.

The Spruce Goose is 218 feet long, has a 320-foot wingspan and is about 80 feet tall. It weighed about 400,000 pounds and was powered by eight Pratt and Whitney Wasp Major 28-cylinder engines. It was built to fly about 3,000

miles at nearly 20,000 feet, cruising at 250 miles per hour.

Nearly 700 banker boxes full of papers and photos related to the plane's construction arrived at the McMinnville museum in February 1993 with the Spruce Goose after a 1,055-mile journey from Long Beach to Yamhill County. Since then, museum volunteers have worked to put the documents in searchable order that could be useful to researchers and hobbyists interested in the plane and its history.

"Before they came to Oregon, the files and boxes were in warehouses that were repositories for everything," said Lydia Heins, the museum's curator and collections manager. "All of that paperwork was just sent to warehouses as a historical asset."

Creating digital versions of the documents and photos is a big deal. According to Nicole Davis, supervisory archivist for Seattle's Museum of Flight, putting the files and photos online turns the collection into a global gem.

"While physical preservation and cataloging of materials is a necessary first step for accessibility, requiring researchers to come on-site to your research center places a big burden on researchers," Davis said. "It limits accessibility to those who can afford to travel to the museum. ... Having materials available online also increase awareness of the materials — now the materials are findable with a Google search, whereas materials that haven't been digitized are much more hidden."

More than 10,000 photographs of the Spruce Goose's construction are housed at the museum's Hughes archives.

Davis said about 500 people visit the Seattle museum's research center each year to search documents and photos. The museum's digital collection gets about 80,000 hits each year, she said.

In late April, Heins applied for \$7,500 in state funds through the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's Historic Museum grant program. The museum plans to match that with about \$6,200 to fund the nearly \$14,000 archive project. If approved, work would begin in mid-July and probably be finished by late April 2022.

Heins said it was the first time the museum asked for grant money to work on the Hughes archives.

Thirty-one large and small museums across the state applied for grants. The Oregon Museum Grant committee meets Thursday to review and rank the proposals. Oregon's Heritage Commission meets June 7 to approve funding for the top proposals.

Vision for the future

Hughes' gigantic H-4 Hercules (he did not like the "Spruce Goose" nickname) flew only once, on Nov. 2, 1947, for about a mile, 70 feet above Southern California's Long Beach Harbor. It cost more than \$23 million to build in the 1940s — probably around \$200 million to today — and spent most of its life in

storage at a Long Beach pier.

Hughes designed and built the plane as a wartime transport to carry troops and material across the ocean without fear of enemy submarines. He began building it in 1942, using wood laminate instead of aluminum, which was in short supply.

The 1947 flight was a demonstration that the massive aircraft could actually become airborne. As World War II ended, Hughes ran into trouble with a U.S. Senate oversight committee digging into wartime contracts. The committee was concerned about how the more than \$22 million the federal government put into construction of the massive plane was spent and wanted Hughes held accountable.

By 1947, the Hercules was no longer needed for military transport. Hughes had spent millions of his own money (along with federal funds) building the plane. Hughes told the Senate committee that if the plane couldn't fly, he would leave the country.

The large aircraft's construction and modifications generated thousands of files, blueprints, change orders, drawings and photographs. Since they arrived at the McMinnville museum 28 years ago, more than a dozen volunteers have dedicated their time to preserving and protecting the documents.



Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum

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