

Tri-Cities History

Kennewick, Pasco, Richland / Washington

Lewis & Clark. Woolly Mammoths. The Manhattan Project. American Indians. Kennewick Man. Discover our heritage and discover the past.

The Tri-Cities has a rich, diverse history and visitors discover touchstones to the past at wonderful museums and science centers.

Lewis & Clark visited and explored our area during their famous expedition in 1805 and 1806. Thomas Jefferson's exploring party spent several days near present-day **Sacajawea State Park** trading with the Indians and cataloging the diverse plant and animal life. Richland's Bateman Island is the furthest point upriver on the Columbia that Lewis & Clark ever explored. Visit the Sacajawea State Park and Interpretive Center in Pasco to learn more about Sacajawea, the young maiden who, while caring for her infant child, worked as interpreter, guide, and icon of peace for the Corps of Discovery. The park and interpretive center features all-new exhibits highlighting the Columbia Plateau Tribes that met with and assisted the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Displays showcase traditional tule-mat villages, and hands-on children's activities will include language translations and touch-and-feel displays. Other exhibits feature the natural environment and Plateau Tribal culture. And perhaps most exciting, the State Park was chosen for an installation by renowned artist *Maya Lin* (designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial). The Pasco installation is one of a series of seven linked-artworks in Washington and Oregon that will commemorate area tribes and the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Learn more about this and many other aspects of Pasco's colorful history at the **Franklin County Historical Society Museum**; a former Carnegie Library, the building is now listed on the national historic register.

Pasco, which developed as, and still is, a major transportation hub, has fascinating ties to railroad history, and the **Washington State Railroads Historical Society** created a **Railroad Museum** in the heart of Historic Downtown Pasco, featuring railway maps, manuals, books, old baggage carts, dishes, uniforms, and other railroad memorabilia. The centerpiece of the museum is an 1878 Porter Bell steam locomotive called Blue Mountain, one of the oldest remaining in the state. This engine used to haul grain from Walla Walla to the ships at Wallula on the state's first mechanized railway.

The history of both Kennewick and Richland is chronicled at the **East Benton County Historical Society Museum** and the **Benton County Museum** in Prosser. The Chemnapum Indians were among the first to call Kennewick home. Translated, Kennewick means "Winter Haven," for the tall grassy fields where they would pasture their horses. These museums also depict the hardships and successes experienced by the area's founding farm families.

Home to World War II's historic Manhattan Project, the Tri-Cities also has a rich technological history. Ever wonder how **Richland High School** came to be called **The Bombers**? The school's moniker actually derived from a B-17 Bomber the Boeing Company made in 1944. This bomber, **The "Day's Pay"** was named for the 51,000 Hanford workers who each donated a day's pay to build the bomber as a contribution to the war effort. To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of this significant event and its role in history, the graduating class commissioned a beautiful wall mural overlooking the school's courtyard that shows this bomber and its squadron in full-flight formation.

The **Columbia River Exhibition of History, Science, and Technology** (CREHST) features a scale-model replica of the "Day's Pay" bomber, signs from the original "Camp Hanford," the story of Hanford's role in the historic Manhattan Project and ending World War II. This museum and science center tells the dynamic story of the Columbia Basin and surrounding area. From primitive irrigation systems to the development and use of holograms and isotopes, visitors of all ages are entertained with interactive, hands-on displays and activities. Explore American Indian heritage; learn of the alphabet houses built for a government-owned town; and discover the bones of a Woolly Mammoth, unearthed right in Kennewick.

Our history also includes that of "**Kennewick Man**," a 9,200 year-old skeleton unearthed in Kennewick's Columbia Park, a significant discovery receiving international attention, for its potential for reshaping traditional theories of the exploration and migration patterns of early European peoples. An exhibit at the

East Benton County Historical Society Museum chronicles this discovery and the ensuing controversy between modern tribes and the scientific community.

Indeed, the area's twelve museums and interpretive centers chronicle the region's diverse history which includes World War II, Alphabet Houses, Oregon Trail pioneers, early cinematography, railroading, agriculture, and more! And in the next few years, the community will welcome the *Walter Clore Wine & Culinary Center* to Prosser and *The Reach Interpretive Center* to Richland.

Visitors, new arrivals, and locals alike, or anyone who likes exploring for that matter, will discover something fascinating about the place Tri-Citians call home!

HISTORICAL TOUR SUGGESTIONS

Benton County Historical Museum

7th and Paterson, Prosser - (509) 786-3842

This wonderful museum showcases more than 20,000 items and "bring the past into the future." Items of interest include 1843 - 1920 gowns, a wildlife diorama, a general store, and numerous Indian artifacts.

Columbia River Exhibition of History, Science & Technology

Connie Estep, curator

95 Lee Blvd., Richland - (509) 943-9000

CREHST tell the story of Hanford's role in the historic Manhattan Project and its current role as an environmental flagship for waste cleanup. Exhibits detail the build-up to World War II; the overnight construction of Camp Hanford; the super-secret development of plutonium at the world's first nuclear reactor (now listed on the National Historic Register and acclaimed as an engineering and architectural landmark); a passionate war effort involving thousands; and finally the end of the cold-war and a focus on environmental restoration. The Columbia River Exhibition of History, Science, & Technology is a state-of-the art center providing a fascinating look into our country's past and education about its future. Fee. www.crehst.org

East Benton County Historical Society Museum

Corene Hulse, director

205 Keewaydin Drive, Kennewick - (509) 582-7704

See the pioneers who followed the mighty explorers Lewis and Clark. Colorful displays depict the hardships and successes experienced by the area's founding families. www.owt.com/ebchs

Franklin County Historical Society Museum

305 N. 4th Ave., Pasco - (509) 547-3714

Sheryl Webb, administrator

Located in a former Carnegie Library, the Museum itself is listed in on the National Historic Register. Pioneer, Indian,

aviation, and railroad exhibits give insight into our regions unique place in history. View wartime memorabilia and the local archive of acclaimed Hollywood cinematographer, James Wong Howe. www.franklincountyhistoricalsociety.org

Sacajawea State Park & Interpretive Center

2503 Sacajawea Park Rd., Pasco - (509) 545-2361

Reade Obern, park manager

Commemorating the Lewis & Clark expedition's historic visit to our area. It was named for Sacagawea, the wife of Charbonneau and interpreter for the Lewis and Clark party. This state run visitor center features the story of Sacagawea, the journeys of Lewis & Clark, and native American history. Local artifacts on display include arrowheads, fishing weights, baskets, and more. Seasonal March through September. Center is volunteer staffed, for hours of operation, contact park manager. www.parks.wa.gov/parkpage.asp?selectedpark=Sacajawea

Three Rivers Children's Museum

5220 Outlet Dr., Pasco - (509) 543-7866

The Children's museum offers educational entertainment for children of all ages. The museum features traveling exhibitions, science and art related fun, and computer games. Call ahead for directions or further information. www.childrensmuseumtr.org

Washington State Railroads Historical Society Museum

P.O. Box 552, Pasco WA 99301 - (509) 543-4159

Jim Bowers, board member

Dedicated to preserving the history of railroads and railroading in the State of Washington. The museum's collection includes train tools and parts, early railroad signs, including an early Pasco depot sign, a 1938 gas-powered speeder used for track maintenance, scales, early photographs, dishes, matchbooks and other rail company memorabilia. Open Saturday only, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: Free, donations welcome. www.wsrhs.org

Columbia River Journeys

Russ & Karen Pelleberg, owners

P.O. Box 1463, Richland - (509) 734-9941

Experience the Hanford Reach National Monument--the last free-flowing stretch of the mighty Columbia River. View Great White Pelicans, Osprey, Blue Heron, Mule Deer, and many other spectacular animals that still inhabit this natural sanctuary. Your captain provides an interesting narrative that includes the history of the former Hanford and White Bluffs town sites, the historic Manhattan Project and the geology of an area only accessible by boat. On-board restroom. Tours run May through October. Two, twenty passenger, shallow draft jet boats. Two tours daily. Fee. Group Discounts. Commissionable. www.columbiariverjourneys.com

Jordan Youngs · Director of Marketing & Public Relations

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Fort Walla Walla Park & Museum

Fort Walla Walla Park, Walla Walla - (509) 525-7703

Constructed on an 1857 military reservation, this museum showcases a pioneer village using original and replica buildings. Exhibits feature early harvest techniques, and include a 33-mule team and wheat combine. Activities include a Mountain Man rendezvous in July, a harvest festival in September, and musical and theatrical events during summer months. Open Tuesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., April to October. www.fortwallawallamuseum.org

Yakama Nation Cultural Heritage Center

200 Spilyi Loop, Toppenish - (509) 865-2800

The Yakamas lived in harmony with these lands for thousands of years. Now the Yakama Indians share their heritage with visitors from around the world.

www.yakamamuseum.org

Whitman Mission

Rt. 2, Walla Walla - (509) 522-6360

The mission was built in 1836 by Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, and played a critical role as a stop on the Oregon Trail. The Whitman's served the local Indians until their massacre. The museum tells the fascinating story of western development and although the original buildings did not survive, their locations are outlined on the grounds. Regularly scheduled pioneer demonstrations and films add to the artifacts on display. www.nps.gov/whmi

The Moore Mansion

200 Rd. 34, Pasco

Built as a private home in 1905 by Mr. James A. Moore. During the roaring twenties, the Mansion was a speak-easy; with secret underground tunnels and passageways which aided in "rum running." Located alongside the majestic Columbia River, the Mansion has served as a private residence, retirement home, restaurant and special event venue. The Moore Mansion was lovingly and carefully restored after being destroyed by arson fire in 2001.