



Gathering Across Time and Cultures

Stories from the past to the present

All across the globe, people have been swept up in two centuries of mind-boggling change. Fort Vancouver's residents and passersby lived that change as you are living today's sweeping changes.

Barbara Little, National Park Service archeologist

Welcome to a place where centuries of stories, both tragic and inspirational, are being uncovered. They center around an 1800s fur trading post (above), but go back to a time before European contact and reach into the present. People's traditions and beliefs, and objects found by archeologists, tell these stories.

A place to meet and trade

Long before the trading post, this broad river terrace was home to many thousands of native people. In the spring, they hosted a gathering of thousands more from different tribes. They all came to this great regional crossroads to socialize and trade, and to welcome salmon returning from the ocean.

Despite disease and conflict, traditional ways continued as much as possible, even as the fort and village grew (far right, above). The terrace continued to be a crossroads, now for native people mixing with people from Hawaii, Europe, Canada, and the United States. Some came by choice, some did not.

NPS / RICHARD SCHECHT



Klickitat Lodge Paul Kane painted this lodge (right) near Fort Vancouver in 1855. He showed how the Klickitat used wide cedar planks and other materials to make a home that

stayed warm and dry during wet winters. He also painted a portable lodge (left), which they used when they traveled on their seasonal rounds of gathering food.

Left to right: Hours of work were needed to turn stone into arrowheads and spear points. Stone for this black pipe may have come from islands along the coast of British Columbia.

This stylized bird identifies a pipe from coastal people. Trade beads came in various shapes and colors; blue beads were among the favorites.

Coins turned into ornaments when drilled with holes. A modern blacksmith forged this beaver trap based on pieces found by archeologists.

The fort's store carried a few kinds of dishware, including Spode, a fine English china. Everyone used it, whatever their rank or income.

Marguerite McLoughlin and her husband John, who ran the fur trading fort, symbolized cultures coming together. She was of Ojibwe-Swiss heritage; he was Canadian.

A field school student assists an archeologist by uncovering artifacts. Curator Theresa Langford says, "Pieces of our identity are captured in the objects we leave behind."

Native and new These names at right, taken from historic records, show the many cultures who crossed paths at the fur trading fort.

Cathlamet Cayuse Chehalis Chinook Clatsop Cowichan Cowlitz Cree Dalles English
French-Canadian Hawaiian Iroquois Kalama Kalapuya Kathlamet Klallam Klickitat Métis Mollala Nesqually
Nez Perce Nipissing Okanagan Pend'Oreille Quinault Scottish Shasta Snake Snohomish Spokane
Stikene Tillamook Umatilla Walla Walla Wasco-Wishram Willamette



In 1855, artist Gustavus Sohon visited Fort Vancouver. His illustration shows a community shifting from a fur trading fort to a military post. A Catholic mission occupies the lower left of the scene.

From Furs to Fighting

A central location for trade and troops

After opening in 1825, Fort Vancouver welcomed traders from across the region to this bountiful site. The fort was surrounded by trees for building and a river full of salmon. Its chief factor (director), John McLoughlin, shared food with emigrants who began arriving on the Oregon Trail in the late 1830s.

Within a decade, though, trouble began. The new American arrivals were taking the native people's homelands for their own farms and industries. In 1846, the US and Britain settled the international boundary, putting this site into American hands.

Then the US Army arrived to keep order locally and to support American settlements. During the decades of Indian Wars, the military post was a prison for people captured during conflict, and spiritual leaders and bands who refused to move to reservations.

Even before the Hudson's Bay Company left in 1860, the Army began tearing down houses and other buildings. They created a parade ground, reduced farmland, and built dozens of new buildings. Their changes buried layers of objects—and thus, history—of people and cultures who had come before.



Left to right: A few of the many rifle cartridges found here. Private Moriarty blew his bugle to send messages at the post. An eagle emblem decorated a 14th

Infantry helmet. This oak-leaf emblem carried a plume for a soldier's hat. Civilian Jehu Switzer used his telescope to scout road locations. African Ameri-

can troops, known as Buffalo Soldiers, were stationed at the military post after fighting in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

RIGHT—LIBRARY OF CONGRESS / J. J. JARVIS; OTHERS—NPS / FOWA

New Centuries, New Roles



Preparing for War

From foot soldiers to airplane pilots

With the new century came a new technology that would change the world—the airplane. By 1911, aviators were thrilling the spectators who gathered to watch their acrobatics over the military fields. In the first world war, planes became essential fighting machines. To make enough planes, the US military

took over the logging industry to quickly log millions of spruce trees from the surrounding forests. In less than one year, the fort's sprawling Spruce Mill (below) turned out enough lumber to produce over 120,000 airplanes. This massive war effort introduced motorized trucks and other changes to the logging industry.

You can still see small planes landing at Pearson Field, a city airport. The park's air museum houses early planes and exhibits of aviation history. Keeping stories alive—from native peoples to a fur trading fort, to a military post and airfield—is the role of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site ever since it was proclaimed a national monument in 1948.

Above, Parade Ground Their job done, soldiers from the Spruce Production Division await a parade in front of commanding officers. It is Armistice Day, November 11, 1918—time to recognize the end of the war.

Below, Spruce Mill Workers lived in tents beside the mill where they turned trees into lumber for planes. This push for wood in the first world war revolutionized the lumber industry.



Military at Fort Vancouver Left to right: People pose in front of the post exchange, or store, in 1910. The "PX" system began here in 1880; now most US military posts have a PX.

Spruce Mill workers might have worn pins of the **Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen**. These two Army nurses were among the 20,000 registered nurses recruited for the war.

In the 1920s, the Pearson Field's hangars and landing strips replaced the Spruce Mill complex.

A soldier in the 7th Infantry would have worn this collar disc (pin). Participants in the **Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)**, a job program of the

Great Depression, came here for training to work in the national forests. Fort Vancouver bustled with soldiers and civilian workers during World War II. These

historic reenactors portray two roles of women during this period—"Wendy the Welder," who assembled ships, and an Army nurse.

May 29, 2017, park rangers raise a **garrison flag** in the same place where one flew in the 1800s. Flown for ceremonies and some holidays, this flag can be seen for miles.

Below From the air, you can see one of the many reasons why city residents treasure this park. Its fields and paths are perfect for all kinds of outdoor activities and events. The river is just a Land Bridge away. And on a sunny day, the view is spectacular.



Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

Today, still a place for exploration and discovery

Welcome to a place where the stories of many cultures are being revealed. The objects and stories come from decades of careful digging, research, discussion, and thought. Explore the park and see how other cultures contribute to your own history.

Start at the visitor center, which has exhibits and films. Walkways connect most features of the park. Pearson Air Museum displays planes and tells the story of aviation. Talk to the volunteers and rangers who bring history to life at the stockade and village. Cross the Land

Bridge, which has reunited the fort with the waterfront one hundred years after the railroad separated the two.

As you explore the park, look for signs of ongoing discovery. Archeologists, students, and volunteers work here every day to uncover the many layers of stories this place has witnessed. Add your own experience to the history of Fort Vancouver.

Getting to the Park From I-5, exit at Mill Plain Boulevard; follow the signs to the visitor center on East Evergreen Boulevard. • From I-205, exit at WA 14. Go west on WA 14 about six miles and take I-5 North. Exit on Mill Plain Boulevard; follow signs to the park.

Safety and Regulations Walk carefully—the ground is uneven. Don't let a slip or fall spoil your visit. • Keep your children close. • Federal law protects all cultural and natural resources. • Firearms regulations are on the park website.

Accessibility We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to the visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check the park website.

Emergencies call 911

Follow us on social media.

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks, visit www.nps.gov.



McLoughlin House The home of the John McLoughlin family is part of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. He retired here after decades of running the fur trading post. Find out how he affected the Pacific Northwest during



This site is in Oregon City, OR, about 30 minutes from the Fort Vancouver visitor center. Limited hours; be sure to check the park website or call before going. Brochure available at the site or on the park website.

More Information
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www.nps.gov/fova

National Park Foundation
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

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